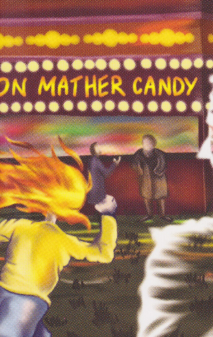


Alan Moore's

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GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY



GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 7 : Annie Besant

Born London, 1847, her impoverished background made Annie Besant a tough and independent radical. In 1877, while living with Northampton's atheist reformer Charles Bradlaugh, the pair published a book on birth control that saw them sentenced to prison for obscenity. Besant went on to organize successful strikes for Bryant and May's match-girls and London's dockers. She spoke for the unemployed in Trafalgar Square at 1887's brutally-suppressed 'Bloody Sunday' event, fought for women's rights and eventually joined the mystical Theosophy movement, where her book *Thought-Forms* (1901) practically invented abstract art. Dying in 1933, she was a true heroine of hip.



GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 8 : Harry Everett Smith

Pretend son of Aleister Crowley, Harry Smith was born in Oregon, 1923. An archivist of American folk music, his 1952 anthology on Folkways Records almost single-handedly started the folk/blues boom of the 50s and 60s. Fascinated by everything, Smith was an important experimental filmmaker, artist, occultist and hoarder - his paper aeroplane collection was eventually purchased by NASA. His abstract paintings of jazz riffs influenced Disney's *Fantasia*, he recorded The Fugs first album and lived off forgiving friends like poet Allan Ginsberg, who correctly regarded Smith as an authentic American magus. He died at New York's Hotel Chelsea in 1991.

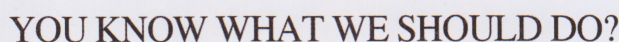


GREAT HIPSTERS IN HISTORY

GREAT HIPSTERS in HISTORY!

No. 9 : Patti Smith

Born 1946 in Chicago, Patti Smith leapt enthusiastically into the hip culture exploding around her, moving to New York in 1967 and befriending photographer Robert Mapplethorpe before becoming a member of the St. Mark's Poetry Project and rock journalist, performing with guitarist colleague Lenny Kaye at NY venue CBGB. Her awesome 1975 debut album *Horses* laid the foundations of Punk, her status cemented by subsequent releases. In 1980 she married the legendary MC5's Fred "Sonic" Smith, a poetic union ended by his death in 1994. Recovering, she's currently a majestic performer, writer and activist; one of our greatest living hipsters.

[illegible]



MAGIC, RUNNING IN THE GUTTERS LIKE LIGHTNING

Here amongst the body-bags and melting icecaps of the modern world, magic is surely no more than a comfort-blanket for the dopey and deluded, or perhaps a lucrative and proven movie-franchise means of separating miracle-starved children and nostalgic, disillusioned adults from their pocket-money.

Alan Moore thinks otherwise.

Magic is something that should not be mentioned in mixed company or, come to think of it, in any company whatsoever. It will kill the conversation dead faster than Houdini and evoke a silence at once horror-stricken, pitying, and uncomfortable, like suddenly announcing that you're partial to incest or Morris-dancing, practices that might have all been perfectly acceptable when we were medieval, but which modern science and common sense assure us we are better off without.

This is particularly true at present, when the science and rationality that dragged our species up from a quagmire of ignorance and pestilence is fighting for its life against a horde of pulpit-pounding, reality-phobic fuckheads who think the planet was, in only seven days, assembled like IKEA furniture a mere six thousand years ago by some kind of talked-up local volcano deity who could apparently have used a course in anger-management and who then planted lots of several-million-year old fossils just to test the faith of 19th century palaeontologists. It isn't simply Darwinism that's endangered here: Reason itself is under threat, along with every last advance in human thinking back to Galileo and beyond. Given the stakes, it seems counter-productive to make any sort of case for magic, seems like muddying already bloody waters to dredge up an idea that is equally despised by those on both sides of this increasingly brutal and bare-knuckled argument.

And yet, what if inside the bottomless top hat of magical ideas were some means of conceptually resolving the dispute, some arcane and discarded worldview broad enough to readily accommodate two seemingly irreconcilable realities, the scientific and the spiritual? After all, magic is older than both science and religion and in many ways is parent to the pair of them, with religion being only tribal magical traditions and creation myths that have been organised on a more formal basis, while science is itself built on foundations of hermetic scholarship and alchemy. Who better to sort out a brawl between the kids than mum or dad?

So, you might reasonably ask, if magic's so important both historically and potentially, what is it? Although a straightforward enough question, this has a variety of answers which depend on who is being asked. A five-year old will tell you with conviction that magic is something that a witch or wizard does to conjure up enchantments or to fly the moonlit skies of Halloween. A Christian fundamentalist will tell you much the same thing but with greater emphasis upon satanic orgies and eternal hellfire, while a scientific rationalist would describe magic as a system of belief that has exploited human ignorance of how the world works to prop up or justify an endless series of scams, tyrannies and slaughters, almost since that world began. There may well be more than an element of truth in all of these opinions, and yet if we wish to understand the subject on its own terms before we dismiss it then we might be better off, rather than consulting outsiders on the issue, in asking how magic has defined itself.





This question will admittedly elicit just as many differing responses if considered across a few thousand years of diverse magical philosophies, but a halfway-serviceable modern definition after the important 20th century magician and alleged Great Beast Aleister Crowley would see magic as the act of bringing about changes in reality according to one's Will. Will is capitalised deliberately, to stand for the intentions and the actions of one's highest self, the wisest and most noble part of us, the part that watches out for us and tells us that pissing in an electric outlet isn't such a great idea. This carefully makes a distinction between our true Will and all our wants, desires and impulses. Running amok at our place of employment or school with a samurai sword or AK47 would certainly bring about change in reality, for both ourselves and for our victims, but these would be changes that only a self-obsessed emotional and psycho-social cripple could find interesting or satisfying. This would be contrary to the whole central concern of magic, which is to connect the individual with his or her highest self and thus transform them into someone much more balanced and empowered, more capable of managing the powerful currents of their life and circumstances that swirl all around them; someone for whom plans succeed and difficulties melt away as if by magic.

Wonderful as this might be, if all there is to magic is some sort of woolly, new-age self improvement program, then what's all the fuss about? Where are the demons conjured hissing into pentacles and all the supernatural powers, the flying through the night on broomsticks? Do these 'changes in reality' we're talking about include changes in the laws of physics, such as those which pertain to gravity, for instance? Pretty obviously, the answer to that question would be 'no'. Does that mean, then, that all the claims made on behalf of magic are no more than a collage of madness, fantasy, fraud and misunderstanding? Given that to say as much is to dismiss the basis for the biggest part of modern science and culture then, again, the answer must be in the negative. This leaves us with an apparent contradiction. Are we saying magic is unreal, or real? Or are we saying that it's somehow both these things at once? The resolution of this puzzle offers us a vital key to understanding magic, but before we can unpick it we must first sort out our terms of reference. Before we can decide if magic's real, unreal or somewhere in between we must first make it clear what we mean by reality.

The first thing we can definitely say about reality from a human perspective is that we cannot experience reality directly. We have photons bombarding our retinas.

We have vibrations in our inner ear, in our tympanums. The cilia of our nostrils and the buds upon our tongues transmit impressions of the chemicals comprising everything we smell or taste, while the minute electrical impulses racing through our nervous systems tell us whether we are touching silk or sandpaper. Moment by moment, we somehow compose these signals into a grand, shifting tapestry we call reality. It isn't: It's our sensory impressions of reality, with a direct experience of the thing itself being impossible. Effectively, to practical intents and purposes, reality is in our minds.

The second thing that we can say about human reality is that we seem to be perpetually experiencing two very different kinds of this elusive quality or substance. Firstly, there is the material world with all its complex and unyielding laws of chemistry, biology or physics that our mortal bodies exist in and interact with. In trying to comprehend material reality, our human consciousness developed an exquisitely precise tool, science, whereby we could measure, study and perhaps eventually understand most of the cosmos that surrounds us. And then, secondly, we have the immaterial realm that our minds seem to be suspended in, the shifting and ungraspable reality of human consciousness itself...which, as observed above, is the only reality that we can ever truly know directly. This 'inner' reality is utterly impenetrable to the scrutiny of scientific method, which requires empirical proof and phenomena that are repeatable under laboratory conditions, thus excluding thoughts, emotions and the rest of our internal landscape. It's ironic, but the only blind-spot in our scientific understanding of the world is consciousness itself, the very thing that science emerged from.

Science's inability to handle consciousness (or even prove that it exists) presents a problem in that if we want to know how our minds work in order, say, to stop them getting ill or maybe to improve them, in the same way that we know these things about our bodies, then we have no one to turn to. Consciousness, of course, also presents a major stumbling block for science itself. Science can quite justifiably claim credit for the countless insights into our existence that it has delivered down across the centuries, but one suspects that with consciousness being very probably the most extraordinary, rare and precious item in the universe, the failure of science to provide an explanation for it must surely be irritating.



From science's point of view, consciousness is what has been called 'the ghost in the machine', a vaporous and elusive spectre that is inexplicable and which thus messes up our otherwise detailed and fairly comprehensive clockwork scheme of things. So vexing is this gap in scientific understanding that some areas of science have tried to paper over it by claiming that consciousness doesn't actually exist, that it's some manner of hallucination caused by glands, by chemicals, by something science is capable of measuring, despite the fact that this flies in the face of all human experience. It also offers us a model of our inner workings that seems limited, impoverished, and functionally all but useless, most especially if we're in any line of work that calls on us to be creative. How are we meant to aspire to the literary heights of Shakespeare or musical composition skills of J.S. Bach with all mental activity reduced to a mere fart of the pineal gland? A richer and more helpful model of awareness would seem to be called for, perhaps based upon more flexible ideas as to what constitutes reality.

For instance, what if rather than denying the reality of consciousness simply because it happens to be outside the parameters of what science can discuss, we instead take the stance that both mental and physical phenomena are real, albeit real in different ways? If we accepted that all thinking creatures were amphibious, in the sense that they have a life in two worlds at once; if we accepted that the phantom world of consciousness was just as real in its own way as the hard world we bruise our shin on, wouldn't we at least potentially have a new way of looking at our own awareness, and perhaps a different means of interacting with our own minds that might turn out to be more productive, fruitful and, frankly, exciting?

The idea that we exist astride two worlds, both the material and immaterial, requires examination, though it should be said that this examination cannot be scientific because, as explained previously, consciousness and science go together like milk and uranium. Is there, then, any evidence for the reality of the two planes we are discussing?

Well, it could be argued that the definite existence of two such realities is, as the saying goes, as obvious as Lady Gaga's cock: There is the world in which physical things like, say, a chair exist, and then there is the different, immaterial world in which the idea of a chair exists. Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that the idea of a chair must come before a physical chair can exist. The same is true of the whole man-made world around us, with our clothes, our homes, our advertising jingles and the language that we sing them in all starting out as an idea in someone's mind, in someone's consciousness. Looked at in this way, the world of awareness, far from being unreal, is the solid bedrock upon which a major part of our material world is standing. Also, it bears pointing out that immaterial ideas are much more sturdy and enduring than their physical manifestations. If, for example, every solid and material chair were suddenly to vanish from the world (and no, I don't know how that would have come about, except perhaps in Dr. Who where there'd be some variety of mucous-dripping aliens for whom "our Earth chairs are a kind of drug"), then as long as we still had the idea of chairs, it really wouldn't be that big a setback. Ideas are immortal, or at least as long-lived as the culture that comes up with them, whereas the objects, monuments and even empires those ideas inspire are transient by comparison. Considered from this angle, which of our two worlds seems the least flimsy and the most important, even the most real?

In this light, we perhaps begin to see how many of the more extraordinary claims made on behalf of magic may have a firm basis in reality, although not the hard, physical reality that we most usually mean when we use that term. We possibly begin to understand that saying magic only happens in the mind or the imagination is potentially a very different thing from saying that it isn't real. Importantly, if we can accept that the insubstantial medium in which our consciousness exists is just as much a world as the more solid medium in which our bodies, furniture and scratch-cards are all situated, then we can at least try to explore that immaterial world and determine its properties, just as our species has so rigorously and rewardingly explored the other realm that our amphibious human breed inhabits, that of matter. Even by simply considering awareness, metaphorically, as being somehow like a world or landscape, we are opening up a family-sized worm-can of fresh possibilities for interacting usefully and interestingly with our own consciousness.



What might such a purely cerebral territory be like, compared with our familiar physical terrain, and governed by what different laws? The laws of space and distance, for example, would be different in a world made not from dirt and rocks but from ideas: Land's End and John O'Groats, famously far apart in the material world, are often mentioned in the same breath and therefore are right next to each other in conceptual terms, are side by side in the peculiar geography of consciousness. The laws of time might well also be different, given that we seem able to travel effortlessly into the remembered past or the projected future in our memory or our imagination, in a way that we cannot accomplish in material reality.

Perhaps the most intriguing question with regard to this world of the mind that we're hypothesising is whether we each have our own sealed and private mental world, or whether it might be more like the way things are in physical reality, where each of us has our own private space...our house or room...while having the ability to venture out into the world beyond our door that's mutually accessible by all, and where we can meet up and interact with other people. If the landscape of ideas were common ground to all of us, this might provide a way of understanding those occasionally reported instances of knowledge-at-a-distance or telepathy. It could also provide an answer to the question asked most often of creative people, which is 'where do ideas come from?'

If consciousness was actually a mutual environment and if ideas were like physical features in that landscape... like pebbles or landmarks, say, depending on their size and their importance... then we'd have to suppose that since everyone has ideas, good or bad, then everyone must be connected with this immaterial world of concepts all the time, whether they be aware of it or not. Some ideas, such as the idea to stick the kettle on and make a cup of tea, are commonplace and could be seen as the equivalent of sand-grains on a beach, in that they're everywhere, are of such little value and so easily in reach that anyone could have ideas like that without the slightest mental effort. Genuinely original ideas are much, much rarer and will take more of a mental journey and a lot more work to track them down, being less like common sand-grains than like a newly discovered species or lost Aztec city. This is perhaps why new ideas are found most often by artists, philosophers or scientists; creative people who are struggling to establish a much deeper and a more exploratory relationship with their own consciousness. It may seem strange to think about awareness as a landscape and ideas as landmarks in that space, distinctive rocky outcrops that we sometimes stumble over in our mental wanderings, but if this were indeed the case it would explain such otherwise improbable coincidences as James Watts' invention of the steam engine at the exact same time that several other people were inventing the same thing, having had just the same idea.

Of course, so far we are considering our mental realm only in terms of its geography. However, when we first set sail on explorations of our physical reality we learned that other areas of the material world were already inhabited by different kinds of people, unimagined animals and unfamiliar vegetation. It might be to our advantage, then, to consider the potential biology of our proposed landscape of consciousness, its fauna and its flora. Journeying into these further reaches of the mind, what other life-forms might we possibly encounter?

Well, if it's a landscape that is mutually accessible, we could perhaps expect to make contact with other human minds that happen to be travelling in the same zone of consciousness, as we suggested earlier with regard to a potential basis for claims of telepathy. Furthermore, if it's a landscape that is indeed timeless, then it might conceivably be possible to meet with human minds that are from our own point of view located in the past or future, which might offer us an explanation for phenomena as various as ghosts from bygone eras or prophetic glimpses of events yet to occur.

Then there's the at first startling possibility of life forms that aren't human, that are instead native to the immaterial meta-territory that we're describing here, creatures made from the insubstantial stuff of thought in the same way that our physical forms are made from flesh and blood, ideas that have evolved to such a level of complexity that they can at least seem to be alive, to be intelligent and independent entities. Living ideas: surely there's room in such a notion that's sufficient to accommodate all of the demons, angels, gods, grey aliens, Smurfs or leprechauns, all the imaginary creatures that we humans have made claims for the existence of since the beginnings of our species, back before we had a rational, material worldview which informed us that the things which we experienced in our minds had no legitimate reality.

In our prehistory, before we even had the concept of a mind, we would presumably have taken our experience of the world to be a single, undivided whole, unable to make any separation between mind and body; between external and internal reality. It would seem natural then, in our stone-age attempts to understand a baffling and sometimes hostile universe, for us to vigorously investigate the furthest limits of our territory, both the world that was available outside us and the world that was available within. In these primitive attempts to engage with what we would come to call our consciousness, we have the origins of magic, and also, coincidentally, of science, art, philosophy and indeed almost all contemporary culture. The first Palaeolithic witch-doctors or shamans or magicians patiently developed a whole range of different techniques by which they hoped to interact more deeply and productively with the mysterious underworld that was somehow inside them. By studying these primordial practices, we can get a much clearer picture of the altered state of consciousness that they believed was necessary in order to practice magic, and perhaps also a deeper and more useful understanding of what magic really is.

In our comparisons of commonplace ideas with sand-grains and of rarer ideas with more distant items that would take more mental effort to locate, we seem to be suggesting that some people are prepared to engage much more energetically and deeply with the world of consciousness than others. It was this deeper engagement that our stone-age sorcerers were seeking, or at least this would appear to be the case given that most of their recorded magical techniques seem to be methods of inducing trance-like states in both themselves and their observers. Their otherworldly costumes, in which are the origins of all film and theatre, were designed to shock those watching into a new zone of consciousness. The chanting and the ritual drumming, from which all music commenced, are still well-known as means of bringing on a state of self-hypnosis, with the same being true of dance, as any hold-outs from the Rave scene would most probably affirm.

And then, also in common with the Rave scene, there are all the psychedelic drugs that shamans are associated with, whether that be the preparations of Ayahuasca or Yagé used by South American rainforest sorcerers, the spotted Fly Agaric mushroom favoured by both Lapland shamans and Viking berserkers, or the common 'Liberty Cap' so-called 'magic' psilocybin mushroom which we may suppose was the most readily available source of a visionary stimulant for the witchdoctors of both ancient Europe and the British Isles. The point is that whether we speak of drumming, meditation, dance or drugs, we're talking about methods that are only useful as a means of penetrating the internal landscape, which would seem to be a world that the magicians of antiquity thought just as real and important as the physical domain around them, if not more so.

The musings above hopefully present a way of understanding rationally how magic might be seen to work, at least by the practitioner: By using ritual or drugs or drumming or some other technique for inducing altered states, the shaman or magician travels further into our suggested realm of consciousness than would be possible in other circumstances. Moving through this realm they may encounter what seem to be immaterial entities with which they may communicate and from which they believe they can glean useful information. In a sense, it doesn't matter if the entities concerned are actually ethereal, independent life-forms or just facets of the human mind and personality that we cannot usually access by other methods. Whether we're communicating with an actual god or with some previously inaccessible part of our own awareness, it would seem to be a thing as marvellous and of as much potential use in either instance.

As we trace the course of magic's evolution from its Ice-Age origins, we are constantly reminded that what people think to be the literal truths of magic are in fact misunderstandings of what are in fact purely internal mental processes. The standard image of a witch astride her broomstick flying through the night air to the Witches' Sabbath (or, for that matter, of Harry Potter playing Quidditch) provides us with a splendid example of this over-literal approach at work. From what we've come to understand of medieval witchcraft, two of the accoutrements often possessed by genuine practitioners were 'flying ointment' and a 'flying harness'.

In the preparation of the former, a variety of common vegetable drugs were combined with fat to make an ointment. These included Henbane, Deadly Nightshade, Angel's Trumpet (all of which are psychedelic at some doses and horribly poisonous at others) along with soporific drugs like Mandrake root (from which comparatively modern sedatives like Mandrax are derived) to make the user sleep. Taken in combination, it might be supposed that this would not be any ordinary state of sleep.

This brings us to the so-called 'flying harness', a contraption made of leather straps in which the wearer could be comfortably suspended as though weightless from the ceiling of a hut or outbuilding warmed to a constant body-temperature and kept in total darkness, muffled to eliminate all outside noises. This would appear to be an early version of today's sensory deprivation or flotation tank, with the would-be witch hanging weightless in the dark and silence, neither too warm nor too cool, feeling both disembodied and adrift in their own consciousness. It was at this point that the flying ointment was administered, smeared on one of the body's mucous membranes that would rapidly absorb its heady mix of psychedelic drugs and sleeping potions.

Though I'm loath to be indelicate and spell this out, the body's most accessible and most absorbent mucous membranes would be those found in the anus or vagina. That's how suppositories work, after all. In the case of the flying ointment, it would be applied to the suspended witch by means of a convenient applicator, such as, say, a broomstick. When the ointment took effect, the witch would be propelled upon a disembodied psychedelic flight through the landscape of the imagination, a flight only taking place within the mind of the practitioner (although as we have pointed out, that isn't necessarily the same as saying that the flight's unreal). It isn't hard to see how the above could easily be misinterpreted and end up as our clichéd image of a hag swooping through darkness with a broom between her legs. Best not to think of Harry Potter in the changing rooms at Hogwarts, getting ready for a match.

As magic became more sophisticated in its practices and theory down across the centuries, we still see the same trance-inducing techniques being used and still see magic taking place almost entirely in the inner landscape of the mind. During the 16th century, Elizabeth the First's official alchemist, adviser, scientist and astrologer was the astounding Dr. John Dee, a man whose abilities with mathematics, navigation and encryption were the basis of the British Empire (a concept that Dee himself invented) and yet who devoted himself to communications through the medium of a black mirror or a crystal ball with startling entities that he described as angels.

**SHE FLOATS ALL OVER
THE STAGE AND INTO THE
AUDIENCE, THEN VANISHES
LIKE A FADING CLOUD ~**



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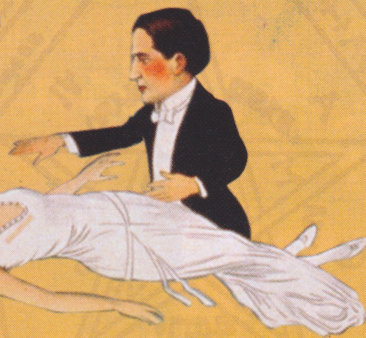
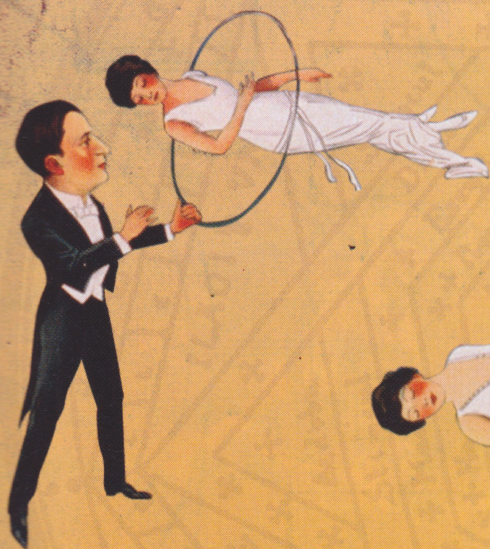
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His angelic invocations, chanted in a channelled or invented language called Enochian, function in the way that chanting did for prehistoric sorcerers, allowing the practitioner to slip into a trance state where they're liable to be receptive to imagined visions in the blurred depths of a crystal ball, used here as a blank screen upon which the observer's inner visions are projected, much like pictures seen within the dying embers of a fire. Despite the fact that all of these drug-induced broomstick flights or crystal ball angelic conversations can only be seen by science as worthless delusions, can we easily dismiss the ideas of a great mind such as the one possessed by Dr. Dee, a man without whose scientific work the later work of fellow alchemist Sir Isaac Newton would not have been possible?

Admittedly, great minds occasionally say or do things that are stupid or misguided, and even an open-minded sceptic who was willing to accept that there might possibly be some truth in our theories about mental space could reasonably ask if there was any practical or useful point to these imaginary exercises. After all, putting potential therapeutic value to one side, what is the point of talking to hallucinations? By their very definition they are unreal things and thus cannot provide us with real information. This is a good point and, on the surface, a persuasive argument. However, it avoids the fact that science itself has no idea where a great deal of human knowledge comes from. The debate's still open, for example, on how we arrived at the most fundamental concept in the whole of human thinking, which is language. As for mathematics, which turns out to be a perfect system that allows us to examine our mathematically-ordered universe, we as yet don't have a convincing explanation for how we came up with it. This obviously doesn't prove that immaterial spirits must have gifted us with language or mathematics, but it also doesn't prove they didn't.

Let's consider the specific case of one small part of our vast arsenal of medical knowledge that of the vegetable drug curare, used routinely in the west because its paralysing properties are useful in those surgical procedures where it is important that the patient doesn't move. Curare is one of the many drugs that we have borrowed from the herbal remedies and medicines used by the natives of the South American rainforests, and in his excellent book *The Cosmic Serpent: DNA and the Origins of Knowledge*, ethno-botanist Jeremy Narby investigates its origins. Curare, used by the rainforest natives as a poisonous tip for their blowpipe darts, will paralyse a treetop monkey so that it cannot cling to its branch but will instead fall to the forest floor where it can be recovered. Better still; the meat will not be tainted by the poison. Now, curare is a compound drug, and the rainforest natives have no concept of scientific method.

Even so, they somehow manage to select the right plants from amongst the estimated millions of separate species to be found within the rainforest, and they somehow know enough to boil the plants together and reduce them to a pulp without inhaling the sweet-smelling but instantly lethal vapours. Then, somehow, they know that the resultant mush will be inert unless it is injected in the subcutaneous tissue just beneath the surface of the skin, as is accomplished by a blowpipe dart, for instance.

Narby felt dissatisfied by all these somehow's, and decided to ask the rainforest people themselves where they'd got their complex information from. Their reply was that the knowledge was imparted by their snake-god through the medium of their local witchdoctors or wise men, the *Ayahuasceros* or 'the men who drink ayahuasca'.

Contacting these sorcerers and taking part in their hallucinatory rituals, Narby experienced a meeting with two large fluorescent talking serpents whom he understood to be the gods that he'd been told of by the natives. He went on to speculate that these 'gods' might be some sort of icon or avatar projected by the snaking double helix of our DNA, if DNA were actually a conscious entity. Whether this is the case or not, the point is that a substance we are happy to use in our rational and scientific western world would seem to have its origins in processes that are beyond the limits of what science can usefully discuss. Without a magic worldview, even if that worldview is anathema to any scientific rationalist, both science and medicine would lack a number of incredibly important tools.

The notion that things of tremendous use or value can be gathered from the insubstantial entities that are encountered in the crystal ball, the psychedelic episode or simply in our wandering imagination hasn't ever been in doubt for the innumerable practitioners of magic throughout history. During the nineteenth century, elaborate magic brotherhoods such as the Order of the Golden Dawn did much to organise some several thousand years of wildly diverse magic theory into a coherent system. Meanwhile, brilliant mavericks like infamous Aleister Crowley or the transcendently unnerving Brixton artist and magician Austin Osman Spare were introducing the idea that the best magic systems were perhaps the ones that you'd discovered or invented for yourself.

In light of all of the above, where does that leave us? Here in 2010, beleaguered as we are by our increasingly invasive and controlling governments, with our material environment and our economies collapsing, should we even be discussing such a thing as magic? Won't that just make God more angry?





On the other hand, if as a species we are circling the plughole of existence then it could be argued that we really don't have anything to lose by just considering a different worldview, and indeed might have a lot to gain. One of the major benefits of the internal magic landscape is that it cannot be penetrated by police or government. In its environment of ideas, much more durable than our own physical environment, it may be that solutions to our current eco-problems can be found... it's fairly obvious that we need to get new ideas from somewhere, after all... and as for all our economic difficulties, as a resource magic is entirely free and doesn't seem to have a carbon footprint.

But, even if we accept that magic might be beneficial, how are we to go about it? Well, we could do worse than looking to the ancient universal principles of magic, as described above, to find our answer. It would seem, for instance, that in order to engage more deeply with the magic landscape of our consciousness, some means of entering a trance-state is required. This could be repetitive and rhythmic drumming, chanting, meditation or a psychedelic drug, depending on the individual's tastes. Before immersing ourselves in our preferred trance, however, we should have in place some method of controlling and directing our hoped-for experience. This is where magic ritual comes in.

A magic ritual, which might involve a lot of different elements, can be seen as a way of programming our minds towards the area of consciousness that we are hoping to achieve or contact. For example, if we wished to contact a symbolic entity like Mercury, the Roman god of magic and communication, we would decorate the space where we've decided to perform the ritual with things that are associated with that god. A good book of magical correspondences like Aleister Crowley's 777 will provide complete and useful tables of associations for whatever entity you hope to get in touch with, but in the specific case of Mercury you'll find that among those associations are the number eight, the colour orange, the perfume storax, the vegetable drug hashish, the precious stone fire-opal and a host of other things. So, when it comes to tarding up your ritual space for your Mercury ritual, you might want to have an orange cloth draping the tabletop or altar, with eight candles lighting the appointed space and some storax gum smouldering in an incense burner. You might want to have an image of the god in question in some central place, either a statue or an image clipped out of a magazine or, best of all, an image that you yourself have created. The combined effect of all these things is to create a mindset that's conducive to the type of magical experience you wish to have.

Some unobtrusive music that adds to the atmosphere and seems appropriate might complement the ritual, and some sort of spoken invocation would provide a focus. You could probably find some already-written invocation to the Roman Mercury or similar Greek Hermes somewhere, but again it would be a lot better to write something of your own. Magic and the creative arts have much more than you'd think in common with each other, and with Mercury as god of writing and communication you might think that he'd appreciate all the creative effort that you've gone to. Write something that's as lyrical and strong and as poetical as you can make it, something good enough to please a god, or at least your idea of a god (which is, after all, all we're talking about here). When you have all this preparatory work in place, that would be a good time to induce your preferred trance-state by your chosen means, and then sit back and wait to see what happens.

This basic and simple methodology can obviously be adapted to whatever sort of magical experience one happens to be seeking, with a little use of the imagination. The above example deals with conjuring some being into your awareness, but could just as well be used if you desired to travel mentally into the world associated with that entity, just as the witches travelled in their minds to their imaginary Sabbat. This technique for mental travel... basically a strenuous form of imagining... could also be used to explore the zones mapped by some magic systems such as the Hebrew Kabbalah or John Dee's Enochian realm, or with a bit of thought and ingenuity could be applied to whatever experimental magical procedure the practitioner might like to try. Importantly, at the commencement and conclusion of the ritual or experiment, it is a good idea to carry out what's known as a banishing ritual, to symbolically seal off the experience and keep whatever forces may have been called up from having any unwanted effect upon your ordinary life. Banishing rituals are readily available in numerous books on magic, or once again you can invent your own.

The reason banishing rituals are necessary is that magic is a subject not without its dangers. Foremost amongst these is the very real possibility of going mad or losing yourself in this new and unfamiliar territory. If one's reasons for approaching magic are for entertainment or for a secret advantage over others or just idle curiosity, then one is probably better off avoiding it, the risks being considerable. Practiced magicians speak of the importance of keeping your four 'magical weapons' with you constantly, at least symbolically. These four symbols... the wand, the cup, the sword or dagger and the coin... are the four suits seen in the Tarot deck.



They represent the four classical elements, fire, water, air and earth, and also represent the human qualities that those elements stand for. Coins or discs that stand for earth remind us that in our approach to magic we must make sure we are grounded and that our material circumstances are sufficient to our needs. Swords, standing for the element of air, are symbols of our intellectual faculties, the cutting edge of our intelligence that helps us to discriminate between a good idea and a bad one and which helps prevent us sliding into mere delusion or perhaps full blown insanity. Cups, representing water, stand in human terms for our emotions and above all our compassion, without which all of the magic power in the world won't stop us turning into arseholes, brutes or monsters. Finally, wands stand for fire and represent our spirit or our soul, our highest self that should be in command of our emotional, our intellectual and our earthly circumstances if we wish to be balanced and fully realised individuals in control of our own lives.

It's this harmonious and empowered state that is perhaps the most important goal in magic, turning yourself into someone capable of leading an enjoyable and useful life while having a benevolent effect upon the world, bringing about changes in accordance with your Will. This is the gold the alchemists were seeking, being much less interested in transforming metal than in their own personal transformation. There's a lot of work entailed, admittedly, but the rewards are unimaginable and more likely to improve your life than winning several million on the Lottery. Of course, there are some people who were hoping that magic would be a way of getting what they wanted without working for it. There are still a lot of would-be magical practitioners who think of magic as a way of, for example, making someone fall in love with them, or conjuring up cash, or punishing somebody who's offended them with a demonic curse. This, in the current author's own opinion, is just lazy, cowardly, manipulative bullshit. If someone's offended you then sort it out yourself, assuming that you can't just, y'know, move on and get over it the way a grown-up would. If you want money, then why don't you magically get off your magic arse and do some magic work and see if money doesn't magically arrive?

And if you want someone to love you, do the necessary work upon yourself that makes you somebody worth loving. Trying to coerce someone's affections through the use of sorcery compares unfavourably with simple rape, where at least you're not trying to involve eternal spirits in your wretched, verminous activities. Generally, the rule is that if there is something that can be accomplished by quite ordinary material means, don't bother magic with it. On the other hand if there's some immaterial demon messing up your life, like anger or depression or addiction, then magic may be the very thing you need to give your problems both a name and face, to banish them or at least to negotiate with them and perhaps see them in a different and more useful light.

Magic isn't there to turn us into gods, although that's certainly what it has been mistaken for. Instead, magic is what can turn us into complete human beings, fulfilled in their lives and in control of their own destinies. Even if all the above is no more than misguided speculation and if there's no more to magic than an over-active use of the imagination, think about the benefits that a better relationship with your imagination might allow you, maybe that job as a writer or an artist that you've always dreamed about, if only you could work out where such people get their ideas from. It may not be the bolts of fire from the fingertips that Gandalf led you to believe it was, but I'm reliably informed that it can still be a productive and incredibly enjoyable existence.

Science is a perfect tool to measure our material universe, but it is only consciousness, beyond the reach of science, that lends that universe its meaning. Without meaning, this is just a random, accidental world and all life is an ultimately unimportant fluke of chemistry and physics. If, however, you chose to see your existence as ablaze with meaning and significance, then magic is a worldview and a faculty that's free to everyone, part of their birthright as a conscious human being. All that's needed is a shift in how you see reality and you can change reality itself, at least as far as you're concerned. With our environmental, financial and personal resources at an all time low, it might be that the most abundant human energy resource of all is right between our eyes, just waiting to be tapped and to transform the battered matter of our world with its endless new possibilities.

We could have magic, running in the gutters like lightning.



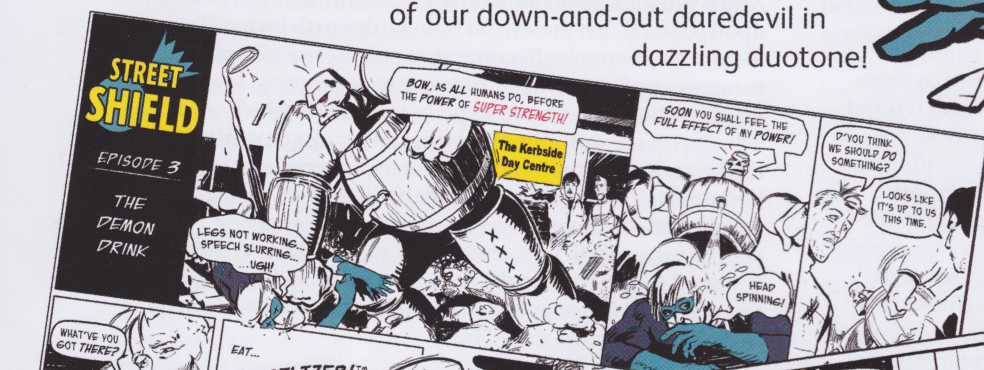
The World's First Homeless Superhero

They say that objects fall towards the Earth. But that's not true; they fall towards the Sun, and the Earth gets in their way. So it was that he fell, burning into the Borough of Kerbside...

Whereas Kal-El touched down in the bosom of the American Midwest, our hero landed in dark alley in a run-down part of town, and was given succour by two rough sleepers. And thus was born the spectacular **Street Shield**! By day, his alter ego learns the rules of the streets and day shelters. By night, he battles the evil foes of his homeless brethren.

See him struggle against the sinister **Spring-Heeled Jack**, defy the discombobulating **Demon Drink**, and hold off harassment by the council and police! And be amazed as he is joined in battle by Scotland's **Golden Blanket** and Wales' **Rough Diamond**.

From the pavement he can see man stripped bare, injustice revealed, crime and perfidy unmasked. So read *The Pavement* every month, and witness the adventures of our down-and-out daredevil in dazzling duotone!



Artwork by Mike Donaldson
miked@hipswitch1.karoo.co.uk

Rights Guide For Rough Sleepers

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- Stop and search | pg 09
- Answering questions | pg 17
- Putting you on | pg 18
- No-drinking zones | pg 20
- Sleeping | pg 21
- Toilets | pg 22
- Highways | pg 23

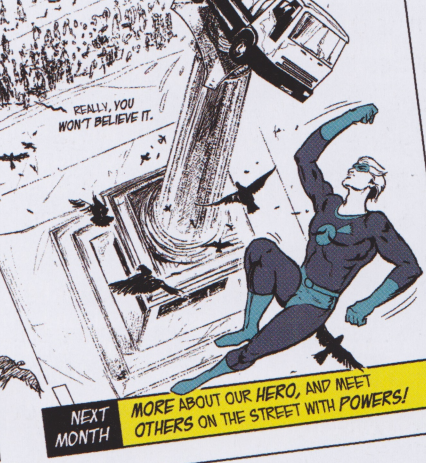
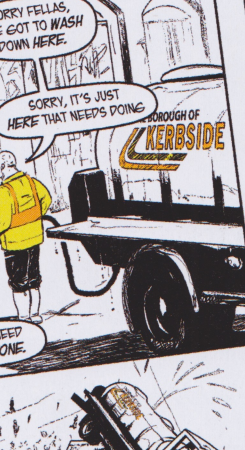
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STREET SHIELD WILL BE BACK IN APRIL



STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 2
'ELLO, 'ELLO, 'ELLO.



the Pavement

is the free, independent magazine for the homeless. Published every month since April 2005, it's a unique blend of news, advice and an up-to-date directory of homeless services. We publish 6,500 copies a month, in four cities,

with more coming soon. The Pavement has a dash of humour in every issue, including cartoons from regular Private Eye artists. The Street Shield comic strip, with Mike Donaldson's artwork, helps us appeal to all ages and literacy levels. If you'd like to more about us, get in touch at our site » www.thepavement.org.uk

Richard Burdett, Editor
richard@thepavement.org.uk

STREET SHIELD

EPISODE 4
THE

UNDER A BRIDGE DOWN BY THE RIVER.

GO WE'RE BEING CHALLENGED ON THE STREETS, HEY?

WELL LET'S GET TO IT, AND THIS LOOKS THE EASIEST WAY TO GO.

IF THE CREATURE WE'RE LOOKING FOR CAN LIVE WITH THIS SHIELD, I'M NOT SURE WE'VE UP TO THIS.

GO, WE'VE FOUND THE BEASTIE IN ITS LAIR!

YES, AND I THINK THE THING OPENS UP NEXT!

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!

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STREET SHIELD
BEWARE,
HERE COMES...

SPRING-HEELED JACK!

NEXT MONTH THE CLASH!



POINTLESS ANGER RIGHTEOUS IRE

THE INTERNET FOR DISPERSAL OF HUFFINESS BY ROBIN INCE

"YOU ARE NOT ENTITLED TO YOUR OPINION, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO YOUR INFORMED OPINION. NO ONE IS ENTITLED TO BE IGNORANT"
HARLAN ELLISON.

Last year I became officially middle aged, and I liked it. Being young has its advantages, the greater distance from death and less paranoia when noticing a new wheezing, but over all I think being in my 40s suits me better. It seems to help sharpen the mind, the focus gets sharper even if my optician's prescription gets stronger. I also started to realize that I had to sort out my pointless anger from my righteous ire, for the sake of my heart and its distance from my ribcage.

I knew that I had to draw the line at writing letters to the Radio Times. Anyway, I got that over and done with in my teens when I wrote to complain about the mitten fingered editing of Get Carter on BBC2. It's one thing to cut the sex and violence, but to exorcise "still pissholes in the snow", that's preposterous.

I noticed my rage had led to a Brundlegfly like transformation - I seemed to have undergone a splicing. This was not the mixing of a genius scientist and a fly, in my version I was a four year old boy placed in the machine who didn't notice a tiny winged Socrates was in there too - the result: I have been transformed to the wretch that keeps asking "but why? But why? But why?"

"The idiots are cocksure, the intelligent are full of doubt"
Bertrand Russell

I used to presume that professional journalists just knew something I didn't. Their certainty showed their intellectual rigor versus my stupidity in issues they were well versed in. What a naïve and silly youth I must have been. With age I was realising not that I was smarter than them, but they might be as stupid as me. I started to wonder what they really knew. So I thought I would ask. I thought I would start gently.

I wrote to Melanie Phillips, the harridan seaside landlady of the Monday Daily Mail. She had written one of her pieces about how all the worst things that happened ever were caused by atheists like Adolph Hitler. I collected a few quotations that suggested Hitler wasn't a very good atheist - "Therefore, I am convinced that I am acting as the agent of our Creator. By fighting off the Jews, I am doing the Lord's work." - the usual sort of thing, and sent them to Melanie. She replied with a page from Wikipedia that proved I was wrong. Surely she knew better than that, she's so clever she's on Radio 4's Moral Maze.

Then I started noticing that Ann Coulter, Fox News's own Betty Grable, was writing jokes that were logically flawed, so I thought I'd help her out. She wrote that Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the house, had commented that oil prices were high because oil men were in charge. Coulter pointed out that if that were true, when Bill Clinton was in charge the prices of cigars and pornography would have gone through the roof. I wrote to her to suggest that actually, as oil men are sellers of oil but Clinton was meant to be a consumer of cigars and pornography, the price of cigars and porn would have gone down under his presidency. This was not the start of a beautiful pen pal relationship.

I was gaining momentum and the modern world was making it easier. The wonderful thing about Twitter, Facebook or even the elderly and eccentric Myspace (how soon the future grows dusty, what was once like a shiny robot is now like a discarded plough), is the accessibility of people.

We are all narcissistic enough to believe our activities are worthy of frequent 140 characters hourly updates, and journalists are rarely people who wish to retire into the half-light, unless the half-light shields a soap actor licking some drugs.

I could use modern technology to find out if anyone who is employed to know what they're talking about, knows what they are talking about or at least can explain why they think they know what they're talking about.

The next couple of paragraphs have had the names removed as I have recently found out that libertarians are actually very litigious.

My first question was to a conservative blogger and author of a book about rubbish beliefs such as homeopathy and holocaust denial. He's also a staunch Catholic, which I found intriguing. This makes me wonder how he can laugh in the face of people who believe that water has a special memory as he is on his way to the local church to have red wine transform into messiah blood. In 140 characters, I asked him why he chose conservatism. He told me it was because he hated lefties. This seemed pretty shabby reasoning, akin to someone asking me why I believe in the theory of evolution via replication, mutation and natural selection and me replying "because I hate God". I then asked him why he had pronounced he was annoyed Kit Kats had become fairtrade. He replied "why do you keep asking such boring fucking questions?" So that was the end of that dialogue. I would never have imagined Papists could be so rude.

I presume he dislikes fairtrade because it's the sort of thing lefties might like. I'm not sure whether it's worth basing your life around annoying people you imagine wear berets and badges, but it seems to be the modus operandi of quite a few journalists.

So far I was learning very little.

Then I was involved in an event which acted as a springboard for various climate change cynics to pen some silly pieces along the lines of "how can there be global warming if it is snowing". Climate change seems a pretty important issue, so I presumed that those vigorously denying man made contribution would have some strong and well-founded arguments.

I wrote to one of the poster boys of the man made climate change cynic gang. He's a funny looking poster boy, the sort that makes me believe there might be something in the science of physiognomy. The gap between his nose and upper lips suggest superciliousness. I wrote and asked him why exactly he believed so many scientists were making it all up. He replied that he had "an unerring ability to sniff out cant". I wasn't very satisfied with that answer. Smelling has not been at the forefront of scientific discovery. - Kepler didn't smell his laws of planetary motion and Newton apocryphally needed an apple to drop on his head rather than smell some pie vapours to come up with laws of gravity. So I asked again hoping for something more specific. "I'm glad you are interested but WHY are you so interested?" and that was the end of that too. I was put on the list of obstreperous individuals who asked questions. Surely if you make your living offering strong opinions you know where you got them from, a camembert inspired dream on a humid night shouldn't be enough.



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I couldn't understand why no one could give me a straight answer, I wasn't being rude or deliberately contrary, I was just asking why someone thought what they did. After all, they were making money from their opinions.

"Where everything is permitted nothing is important, where nothing is permitted everything is important" (Philip Roth I think) It was beginning to seem that the main motivation of these journalists was to be little contrarians, even though they were odd contrarians as the newspapers they were writing for were full of people in agreement.

I imagine they had once annoyed a man in sandals with a ponytail and an organic flapjack, and it had caused a frisson of excitement in their organs. Slowly, their addiction to the frisson took over from anything rational or good or right. One day they woke up, and they'd forgotten that their septic slurs were a game, and they became real. The only problem would be if any of us might pose the occasional "why" question. At that point they would swing around and declare that it was all so unfair and anyway, the poor suffering public had been brow beaten and bullied by Lesbian agitators again. "Oh I bet you don't ask lefties these awkward questions that require empirical backing?" I do. It's just so far they've been more civil and offered up the information I asked for. Really, I suppose I should be ignoring all of the nonsense, why waste time on silly to dos with keen narcissist contrarians when there are books by Orwell, Ballard, Russell, Feynman to read? Goddammit, I wish I knew. I have now wasted nearly a month debating with a right wing site in America over an obituary.

Howard Zinn died on 27th January this year. I came to his work late on after hearing a lecture, Artists in the Time of War. In the United States he is best known for his book The People's History of the United States of America, a look at history from the perspective of the workers, women and underdogs who don't usually get statues in town squares. I liked what he wrote, it seemed very humane and passionate. He seemed to believe in a better society for all. He had been on the front line of the anti-segregation movement in the sixties, highlighted the My Lai massacre, spoken vehemently against war, and been prepared to take a baton to the head for his beliefs. He was the sort of man who would write "I agreed with the judgment of the Roman biographer Plutarch who said, 'the poor go to war, to fight and die for the delights, riches and superfluities of others'"

And

"we need to point to the reckless waste of the world's wealth in war and militarism, while a billion people in the world are without clean water, and a hundred million suffer from AIDS and other deadly illnesses"

He was not very popular with the American right, especially right wing American who can only survive by living in a thick fog of delusion. To question that any action by the US government was not the action of a comic book superhero against wicked evil is to be a Communist, to question their worldview is to be called a brainwashed imbecile. After hearing of Howard Zinn's death I wandered through the internet peering at obituaries.

Before long I found that the bitter, antsy right sites had not taken long to start pissing in his grave. They are the kind of people who believe they have a right to piss in graves, but should you even say "errr excuse me, why are you pissing in this grave?" they will declare that it is vicious censorship to even question the pissing and it is enshrined in the constitution that every man and woman has the right to piss on whom they like, dead or alive, without being questioned.

Many obituaries declared him evil, a bad human being and anti-American. I thought this was a bit much the day after a man had died, and not someone who had created a genocide, poisoned water or been frequently Priapic near school playgrounds.

Zinn was also accused of being a Stalinist. So I wrote to some of the sites to point out that he had made clear that from 1946 onwards, having read some work of Arthur Koestler, he was no fan of Stalin. As it turns out, this didn't matter because he was a Stalinist by supporting Stalinist regimes such as Cuba. I asked what a Stalinist is. The replies can be precised as "you know, a Stalinist durrrrrr"

I asked what makes someone anti-American – is it being against segregation? Or is it reporting human rights infractions? Or being against childhood poverty?

The answers came, but none were about what I asked. The answers presumed that I was obviously some crazed nut with a Trotsky tattoo on my butt and therefore my questions need not be answered.

And so I have discovered that the way to argue is very simple – you say what you want, then if anyone asks you why you said it, you reply "because it is", like a parent whose been asked why the sky is blue and doesn't know the answer. Ask any further questions and the best reply is a slur or presumption.

The journalist contrarians think they are like H.L. Mencken and William Hazlitt, clever men with an underlying morality and an ability to debate their point. The majority are really glib and fatuous typists who sneer and care for nothing but their reflections. Climate change would only worry them if it was going to dry up the pond they were staring in. Their philosophy is a haphazard mess of hypocrisy. They are teenage boys with a big felt tip pen and a blank toilet door to cover in spurting cocks and "you are gay" graffiti.

I think my actions are possibly pointless, but if you are bored one day and a little annoyed, why not politely ask your journalist of choice your "but why" question of the day, and see if you're fobbed off, lied to or just plain ignored. Maybe you'll find out you were wrong all along. We can all take the role of the gadfly biting the horse's backside because it seems like a lot of people are being paid to tell us nothing whatsoever.

"The role of the artist is to transcend conventional wisdom, to transcend the word of the establishment, to transcend the orthodoxy, to go beyond what is handed down by the government or what is said in the media" Howard Zinn



"COOPERATIVE SCAVENGING"

BY MARGRET KILLJOY

"We have no more interest in repairing civilization than a scrapyard does in repairing cars. When you see a roadkill deer, you don't attempt emergency breathing—you skin and eat it. Well, if you eat meat."
—Sara Czolgosz

In Dodge Logic #2, I laid out the basics of post-civilisation theory (affectionately referred to by most people I know as "post-civ"). The really, really short version of it is: we don't like civilisation, but we're not primitivists either. Oh sure, we learned a lot from our relationship with civilisation, but in the end, it was just too abusive. It's time to break up, it's time to move on.

In this issue, we're going to take a close look at post-civilised approaches to production and highlight a possible way to undermine the capitalist economic system.

The Scavenger Versus The Civilian

Let's say there's a civilian, and she's hungry. She chooses a recipe from the cookbook and then goes to the store to purchase the ingredients.

Elsewhere, there's a scavenger that's hungry too. She looks to see what food is available and plans her meal accordingly. At all times, she's passively on the lookout for food, from her garden, from the dumpsters, the discount bins, or gleaned from wild plants.

You might have guessed it: we, post-civilised, favour the scavenger approach. This applies to almost all things, from art to science to education. We favour this approach for so many reasons (admittedly, aesthetic taste is among them).

The civilised idea is that productivity exists for its own sake: automobile manufacturers make cars because *it's what they do*. At no point is the question asked, "Have we made enough cars yet?" (The answer to that question, by the way, is obviously *yes*. Even if we *wanted* a car culture, we have all the personal automobiles we could possibly need, waiting to be repaired or improved upon.) Forests get cleared and new houses get built while buildings elsewhere sit empty.

This sort of behaviour is not reflective of the cunning and resourcefulness of the animal we evolved to be.

It's a cultural imposition forced upon us by civilisation.

A civilian will shop for ideologies like she's buying a new phone, taking a gander at a few before picking one right off the shelf. A scavenger will dissect ideologies, collect the interesting bits, and put them together with other ideas to form her own worldview.

Because, when it comes down to it, a scavenger is a hacker, a hacker is a scavenger.

"That's fine and good for a tiny minority," you might be thinking (or, more interestingly, screaming and gesticulating wildly), "but an entire society couldn't function as scavengers: who would grow the food? Who would build the tables?"

And you'd probably be right, if you were thinking or yelling that. Most of us live in population densities too high to sustain a hunter-gatherer lifestyle. But hunter-gatherer isn't what we're going for, exactly. We'll grow food, we just aren't going to grow mono-cultured corn for export. We'll still build tables, but we'll build them out of what's available, and we'll build them where it's appropriate.

This isn't about a purity of approach. In fact, it isn't about purity at all.



Undermining the Capitalist Economy

We want to use the resources that are available to us already before we go about making more. How, then, do we restructure society to allow for this? Revolution is always a possibility, albeit one without a tremendous track record. Collapse? Civilisation, at least the global one, is as likely as not going to do itself in at some point. But who wants to die, and who wants to wait until we've left the land and oceans scorched and devoid of life?

Post-civilisation theory posits that it's useful to begin to live post-civilised here and now, whether or not a rev-ocalypse is going to save us in a year or two. So how are we going to do it?

Nothing I'll talk about in this column, today or ever, is meant as prescriptive. But there are a couple ideas out there.

One of them is to begin to supplant the market capitalist economy, right the hell now. The co-op and syndicalist movements of the 19th and 20th century were on the right track: The co-ops took the middleman out and distributed directly to people, saving everyone money. And the syndicalists took control of industry by firing their bosses and working as equals. But we don't really *want* money or industry, certainly not on the scale we have today.

If most of the *things*—the actual tangible objects we need—have already been made, it can be as simple as getting them to people free of charge. Free stores, we call them in the US (and give-away shops elsewhere, I believe). These are storefronts operated by volunteers that act as second-hand shops in which everything is free.

But by and large, these storefronts are isolated and cannot handle the enormous mass of goods that will otherwise be wasted every day in the civilised world. So then, my proposal, to be enacted on a citywide level:

-Rent or purchase a warehouse. Store donated and acquired resources.

-Rent, purchase, or squat storefronts in multiple neighbourhoods throughout the town.
Distribute said resources.

As more people's needs are met outside of market economics, the less they will depend upon that market. With less people shopping, the capitalist economy will suffer, leaving more people dependent upon the new, alternative economy, which will experience growth. Eventually, the old methods will be obsolete. The gift economy will grow beyond second-hand items to include food, artisan crafts, and volunteer labour.

There are two major obstacles to overcome on the local level in order to be effective: Rent and the clubhouse effect.

By *starting* with a network of stores (and a warehouse), rather than a single location, we can hope to minimize the clubhouse effect. People often feel alienated by the cliquish nature of radical circles. Some people who have pointed this out in the past feel like the proper solution then is to water down our politics, or to ascertain that we in no way look or act "weird." This is the lowest-common-denominator approach that, among other things, explains why large-scale majoritarian democracy always leads to such bland, useless culture and politics.

So instead of a single homogenous radical culture, it's best to have a large number of diverse cultures acting in solidarity with one another. Allow the central warehouse to be common ground for all of the groups, but let each individual free store be as subcultural as it wants. Just be certain to encourage all subcultures to participate and get in on the act.

The issue of rent can be more complicated. The stores could run on a voluntary subscription model: Subscription carries no specific, tangible benefits (like the first pick of the best recycled stuff), but would encourage people to donate some portion of their income every month to pay the rent on the individual stores and the central warehouse. Obviously, methods that minimize costs may be necessary. This can work with no paid staff (after all, a full-time volunteer ought to be able to live entirely off the goods within the gift economy!), bike carts and bakfiets can be used to transport goods whenever possible, and storefronts can be squatted in places where open squats are tolerated.

But these obstacles are, really, quite minor. And now, in what yet might be the death throes of the existing economy, the need of—and opportunity for—a better method of economics has never been greater.



OUT WITH THE OLD NEW IN WITH THE NEW OLD

BY GED MATTHEWS

DRAWINGS BY SUSANNAH HOGAN

Start making tough decisions, some of which will be counter-intuitive and unpopular. In his new book "WHOLE EARTH DISCIPLINE" he demonstrates that nuclear energy is more 'green' than solar power, as the number of solar panels necessary to give electricity to the burgeoning populations of the earth would cover the entire surface of North America. "Renewistan" he would call it. Although, it's unlikely that the USA would be up for it.

READER: [Looks off into distance, wistful] It'd be smashing to be at UN when they ask 'em, though...

GED: [Nods vigorously]. But are our current politicians capable of grand planning?

READER: [Eyes roll] You're about to go off on one aren't ya?

GED: Look at the 'credit crunch' [READER groans] and the resulting recession. It was uniformly agreed

that the financial structure needed radical change. So, the usual types jetted off to the usual plush hotels for G20 and, instead, thought it better to get the failed system back to usual as fast as possible. Like a cheapskate landlord who doesn't want to fork out on proper tiling for his tenant's bathroom, and just keeps giving it a coat of white paint every year on top of the old, peeling, mould-ridden layer.

READER: [Pause]. What a strangely specific example. Did that just happen to you by any chance?

GED: [Sheepish] Ye-es...and it's the road to catastrophe for that bathroom! [Quickly becomes overexcited, punctuating his sentences with underlinings and capitals] The origins of the TWO WARS we are currently engaged in are seen as irrelevant by POLITICAL FIGURES! Enquiries into international crimes committed by our leaders are not taken seriously, existing only to fail; like when Ireland put forward those terrible Eurovision entries to lose on purpose.

READER: I don't remember that, therefore it's a rubbish analogy. And why'd you put that arrow here? It's awkward.

GED: [Too wrapped up to notice criticism] Such behaviour adds insult to injury and although we may be eager to throw inconvenient facts into the memory hole, other nations may not be.

THE READER takes one glance at this utter mess of a page and, with contempt, begins turning over.

GED: [All of a sudden-like] Hello, Sir/madam. I reckon we need a good rethink of our political system.

READER: [Deliberately unimpressed] Hmm...bit too blunt. Thanks, but I'll be off...[tries to turn page]

GED: [Ignoring last comment] It takes real skill to ignore the many species-threatening crises stalking us.

READER: [Pulls face of incredulity] "Stalking"? Is this the first time you've written an article, or something?

GED: [Embarrassing nervous laugh] No! [He lies]

Let's look at Copenhagen '09, intended to be the pivotal moment when the leaders of the Economic North saved the planet by putting aside selfish interests. Sadly, this was far from reality. But that didn't stop them pretending what a tremendous success it was; wheeling out the corpse of Copenhagen, waving his hand in front of him and claiming that the juice leaking out from beneath his oversized sunglasses was merely tears of joy...

READER: Like "Weekend at Bernie's"? [Slightly smug]

GED: Exactly! [Not actually seen it but aware of its cultural significance. Momentarily ponders adding it to his LoveFilm list, but decides against it.] The façade of success was more important to the main players than actually averting catastrophe.

READER: [Eyes squinting to read, beginning to get a migraine.] Could you space your words out more? Getting a bit cramped in here. Just write normally!

GED: Sorry. [He lies.] This better?

READER: Don't be daft, now, 'Ged'. If you're forcing people to read your little rant, make it legible.

GED: With gusto! [Barrelling through] According to Stewart Brand, maverick environmentalist and 'ecopragmatist', if we have any chance of avoiding global disaster governments need to



And when such nations refuse to help us or cooperate with us in the future, no one in Westminster will remember why!! [Realises he is standing up. Quietly sits down and composes himself by straightening his t-shirt which didn't actually need straightening.]

READER: [Hasn't been paying attention for the last paragraph. Hopeful] Oh, have we finished? Lovely! At least it was fairly short...

GED: [Expertly ignores last comment] So, [breath] we need a new element to help churn up this stale system which reduces paramount problems to disconnected soundbites and has unrepresentative parties seeming like the same side of the same coin.

READER: Thanks for overexplaining your wee end drawing.

GED: No problemo! But rather than just regurgitate the typical leftist arguments for the sake of a whinge, I'm going to chip in with one possible solution: create a new political party that thinks global and long-term. And, as every Hollywood producer knows, it's much easier to reinvent than invent - so, I propose...

READER: [Cuts in, smugly] The "New Old Labour party"? I looked at the poster below. [Enjoyed that.]

GED: Err...yes!! New Labour is concerned with being appealing to all and sexy, where as Old Labour was populated by serious-minded, socially-concerned old men. By combining the two you get...

READER: Sexy old men?

GED: Well...I...[cough] was imagining a party with genuine socialist leanings, unlike the

Liberal Democrats, who seem to have moved left primarily to steal votes. New Old Labour could develop an updated Clause IV, with greater weight given to environmental issues.

READER: You can tell you're in your last column 'cos you're really cramming these words in!

GED: Sorry. Try reading more slowly. Old Old Labour were far from perfect, but they had some significant achievements worth mentioning: Clem Atlee Stopped Truman dropping an atomic bomb on Korea; in 1956, Gaitskell campaigned against war against Nasser; and Wilson refused to send British troops to Vietnam. If a similar spirit can be mixed with a decent measure of eco-pragmatism and public accountability we'd have a potent mix.

I had a quick look at the Electoral Commission website and discovered that it only costs £150 to establish a new national party, so I reckon...why the hell not?! My email is ged.p.matthews@gmail.com. If there are enough people interested I'd happily cough-up 150 quid...as an experiment. [Pause.] You've been very quiet...

READER: I've been thinking. This is your first published article, right?

GED: Ye-es...

READER: [With growing suspicion] And in this first ever article, you're attempting to gather support for a potential new government of which you will probably want to be the leader?

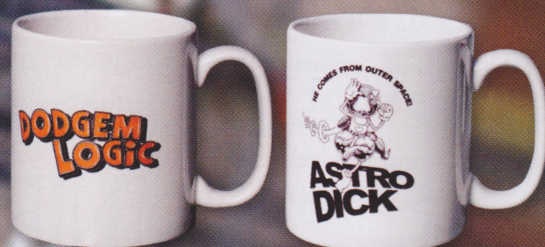
GED: [T-shirt quickly becomes damp. moves his eyes shiftyly from side to side. He 'ums + ahs' until he runs out of space] Umm...ahh



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END!
IS DA
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YUM

TH PART 1'S OVER

LEMME STICK THIS IN YAI!

PHEW

LIFE IS SHIT
AND YOU MITE AS WELL END IT ALL NOW!

HEY KIDZ!
CHECK OUT THIS
UNPUBLISHED IMPROV
STRIP I FOUND IN ONE
OF MY OLD SKETCHBOOKS.
DEEZ! I MUST HAVE
BEEN CRAZY!

70s

FROM THE

SCRAPS

SAVAGE PANG'S

THE PLANNERS & THE PLANNED

Sightlines on the legacy of modernist planning and development in Northampton

By Garry Mills

Foundations

What makes a reputation? And at what point does a bad reputation become stigma? In the five years since inception, the West Northamptonshire Development Corporation has faced repeated calls for its termination amid complaints that it is both costly and undemocratic. Of course, this is actually all part of the remit: like all development corporations before it, the WNDC is a quango (a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation), and as such enjoys devolved power, and as a Government-appointed body, its members are unelected. But it could also be said that the WNDC was created with a certain stigma built-in, inevitably carrying as it does the blemishes of Northampton's earlier skirmish with expansion, an experience from which the town still struggles to come to terms with today.

Although the grave need for a restoration of civic pride is surely unarguable, there are numerous points on which Northampton might oppose the dubious fanfare of regeneration in 2010. Not least the fact that throughout the 1970's and early 1980's, the original Northampton Development Corporation was charged with both the commercial modernisation of a tired market town, and the construction of a brand new residential overspill addendum in one stroke of the draftsman's pencil (or swing of the wrecking ball, depending on your outlook). Their house building programme comprised over 8,000 new dwellings constructed between 1970 and 1985, an approximate half rented/half private split, with the speed of rented house building peaking at 1,500 during the 1975/76 financial year. This professed course was, in effect, the enforced wholesale rebirth of a new town from old.

As part of the third and final wave of post-war developments designated under the New Towns Act of 1946, Northampton, like Peterborough, was one of the conspicuous expansion projects; the NDC could not simply build on a predominantly clean slate like the satellite new towns. It did however have to contend with an existing heritage and largely suspicious local community, and work in tandem with an incumbent borough council. It was here that Northampton learned that the glossy façade of 'regeneration' doesn't necessarily mean improvement.

Now regarded in the main as a failed experiment in social engineering – and most crucially as a disastrous period of town planning and architecture – the new town objective was simple. With the heaving conurbations of the UK's major cities virtually at breaking point, the New Town Commission set up the development corporations to then siphon off the populace into brand new communal idylls where modern neighbourhoods could prosper via motorway-linked industry, yet simultaneously thrive off the benefits of the kind of wide open green spaces that the still bomb-pocked metropolis couldn't provide. Northampton was given the go-ahead for expansion in 1968 on the basis of its central location and good transport links with the north, and was assigned with the task of absorbing overspill from London.

If, in superficial terms, reputation is informed in part by the names and titles we give to things, then Northampton's new town regeneration provides some telling examples.

The very management of a proletariat mass labelled 'overspill' is somewhat inauspicious in itself, redolent as it is of a glut, of effluence. In his NDC-commissioned 1985 story of the development, *Expanding Northampton*, Hugh Barty-King highlights an unwitting exercise in division-by-definition, where an internal NDC reference to the 'Eastern District' – coined in order to distinguish the programme from the area in the south west of the town which would see a later residential expansion – enters the public vocabulary, thus establishing an unwanted 'two-town' image from the off.

Constructed in and around existing farmland, woodland and a number of sites of archaeological interest, the Eastern District comprises an approximately rhomboid enclave of a dozen or so estates of mostly rented housing. Here, names are mostly inherited, reflecting past land use and historical significance, yet somehow intentions miss their mark.

The first estate to be built, Lumbertubs, draws its title from nearby Lumbertubs Lane, through which timber rolled en route to repair damage wrought by the Great Fire of 1675. The precise influence of JRR Tolkien on the NDC's choice of name here, however has not been proven one way or another, sounding as it does like an accommodation for a Hobbit or indeed Smurf contingent. Similarly, the Bellinge estate is named after the description used by Normans for the area now known as Great Billing in the Domesday Book: you may be forgiven for assuming it shares the title with a fungal infection.

Perhaps more revealing are the slang names given to some estates. The aforementioned Lumbertubs was quickly dubbed 'Dodge City' owing to the maze-like layout of cul-de-sacs and alleyways, whilst the plywood walls and jumbled road designs of Thorplands earned it the nickname of 'Shanty Town'. Most damning of all, and the biggest signifier of the Eastern District's battle to revive its standing, is the epithet handed out to the horseshoe-shaped estate of Blackthorn, where social tribulations distorted its naming after nearby woodland into the alias 'Smackthorn'.

So, in revealing a little of the depth of the Eastern District's problems over the years, so too does this glib rendering of Blackthorn's story point the way to the roots of the overall expansion's parlous repute. The sheer speed of decline is possibly the most alarming feature of this turbulent and frequently tragic tale, as the expression of a pioneering utopian ideal warped itself with improbable ease into an interminable unravelling of crime, deprivation and squalor.

It must be virtually impossible to construct a complete, definitive treatise on the innumerable human factors responsible for the dysfunctions of the Eastern District over the years, specifically within the context of the relative crime trends of the wider society and the ebb and flow of the political and economical landscape. What may however be helpful in increasing our understanding of why Northampton's new town deteriorated so rapidly is to consider its story as a microcosm of changing architectural fashions and an observance of the traditional divisions of the British class system.

In seeking a certain culpability for Northampton's failings – or indeed those of any of the new towns – we may not do better than to establish a framework for study, that which posits what Nigel Warburton defines in his biography Ernő Goldfinger – *The Life of an Architect* as “the fallacy of architectural omnipotence” on the one hand, and the more metaphysical, psycho-geographical consequences of town planning on the other. Warburton's reference stems from the catch-all delusion that “whatever happens in and to a modern building is somehow all the architect's responsibility and fault”, and is a recurring cheap shot solely levelled by opponents of modern architecture: The same crime and deprivation may be visited upon Victorian or Edwardian terraces, but the buildings in these instances will for some reason be irrelevant. The part played by psycho-geography, interpreted by the Situationist theorist Guy Debord as “the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals” may in part explain (notwithstanding the occasionally wary, entrenched point of view on the part of some of the locals no doubt) some of the aforementioned estate nicknames. It would also clarify the particular place held in the hearts of Northamptonians for the notorious Brutalist imposition of the gigantic Greyfriars bus station.

Goldfinger's story is key when reflecting upon both Britain's struggle with modernism and the rise and fall of the post-war social housing boom. The Hungarian architect was a pioneering translator of Le Corbusier's melding of the International Style with an urban high-rise philosophy, central to which was the reduction of incessant outward urban sprawl by the building of streets in the sky. His now iconic developments of Trellick Tower in West London and Balfron Tower in the East End have in recent years achieved Grade II listed status, yet the formative years of these estate blocks were anything but celebrated. Trellick in particular became a hive for drug dealing and vandalism, due primarily – as Goldfinger saw it – to the Greater London Council's refusal to implement the concierge system which he'd created space for in his design.

The misapprehension that architects during the '60s and '70s were allowed to run wild through the urban landscape, somehow rampantly living out their idealistic dreams unchecked, is crucial to dispel. The inhibitions felt by Goldfinger to be so detrimental to Trellick's security have been far more acutely suffered by the Birmingham architect John Madin. Now in his eighties, Madin is alive to see many of the municipal buildings he designed fall prey to the wrecking ball, one by one. His stunning upturned ziggurat created for the city's Central Library was originally intended to form the central focus of a wider complex including a bus station, surrounding water gardens and walkways linking other civic structures. None of these further developments were fully realised, and in 2007 Madin described the neglected pools he designed as “a scene of absolute devastation”. It too is now poised for demolition.

In May 1968, between the completion of Balfron Tower and the development of Trellick, the Ronan Point tragedy served to confirm the public's worst fears about both modernist housing and high-rise development. Faulty engineering and construction meant that a Danish large panel prefabrication system – used successfully in low-rise housing throughout Europe – was implausibly deployed over an enormous 23 storeys. The building was thus ill-equipped to withstand the small gas explosion that caused the collapse of one entire corner and the deaths of five residents. Subsequent investigations found wall panels resting on just two bolts with no mortar, with spaces between the bolts filled with newspaper.

Not only were tower blocks deemed threatening to social interaction and conducive to crime, now they were downright dangerous, and – most pertinent – built on the cheap.

By the time Northampton's expansion began in earnest at the turn of the 1970's, the hopeless image of the high-rise resulted in a minimal construction of orthodox tower blocks in the Eastern District. How was it then that all the suspicions of the modernist ethic and the ineptitudes of its fulfillment came home to roost in the town's new social housing system?


The only slight deviation to the rule of relative flat block scarcity in Northampton is Lings flats, completed in 1975. This scattered low-rise scheme, built as a series of three and six-storey blocks across both Lings and Lumbertubs to apparently form – according to a somewhat dainty NDC depiction – a “string of beads” design linking both estates, hints at a rare creativity of design for the development's housing. The large block's slashed snub roof cuts a dynamic line into the expansion's skyline, whilst the outer octagonal forms earned the erroneous nickname of ‘the 50p flats’. Sadly, this was also to prove an all-too apposite indication of the cut-price house-building ethos throughout the Eastern District. And although it's scarcely acknowledged today, Northampton was no stranger to the most groundbreaking 20th century architecture either.

Although the town is renowned for its shoe-making trade and associated proliferation of Victorian factory buildings and workers' terraces, it is also home to the most outstanding Art Deco municipal architecture. The Fire Station in the Upper Mounts area of central Northampton, built in 1935, is a strident, strapping building, indicative perhaps of those who toil from within it, whilst the neighbouring swimming baths from a year later boast a more ornate, angular façade and a magnificent arch-topped pool, thought to be the only working Deco design built for such a purpose in the country. The apex of Abington Square meanwhile is graced by the trademark curves of Associated British Cinema's eminent in-house architect, William R. Glen, in the shape of the former Savoy Cinema, also from 1936. This stunning Deco archetype, more recently recognised as the Jesus Centre following purchase by the Jesus Army, is a Grade II listed gem on the town's horizon.

Elsewhere, innovative trends in architecture had already spread across Northampton to affect a slight yet indelible mark on residential design. The renovation of no 78 Derngate in 1916 by Charles Rennie Mackintosh for the model maker and engineer Wenham Joseph Bassett-Lowke, is a triumph of both Art Nouveau and modernist design. This remarkable individualist dwelling, with its vibrant interior flourishes and stark linear rear outer extension, was the last completed commission for the luminous Glasgow-born Mackintosh, a peerless artist, architect and designer known mostly for the imprint he left on his hometown. After a thorough restoration, this most eccentric of Georgian terraced houses is now a distinguished tourist attraction.

Of equal, though frustratingly more impenetrable appeal, is ‘New Ways’, Bassett-Lowke's next residence, designed by the German Peter Behrens in 1926. Thought to be the first modernist house in the country, its frontage features an array of minimalist details, from the faux-crenellated flat roof and turret-topped angled glass central pillar to a discreet, judiciously apportioned porch-way. This single aspect is alas as much as the visitor can enjoy through the long, gated entrance on the Wellingborough Road today. It would also be the last glimpse Northampton would see of contemporary housing design for over 40 years, before a most radically diluted and ill-fated brush with the modern.





The Great Cleave

It seems the most wretched bad fortune that not only should Northampton bear the worst of the country's at best acrimonious relationship with forward-thinking architecture, but the nadir formed by a downward spiral of political machinations and the most virulently disingenuous brand of economy imaginable in addition. These factors conspired against those promised their new lives and new careers in a new Northampton (in much the same way that they did for the displaced inhabitants of the new Skelmersdale, Telford and Milton Keynes – virtually none of the new towns, particularly those later designations, could ever have hoped to maintain their initial pace and fervour), and the dream was swiftly exposed as delusion.

But to imagine this turning of the tide was not preventable however, that the crumbling of the new town ideal was out of the hands of Northampton's aldermen, and that the twinned souring of the reputations of both modernism and social housing represented an insurmountable new challenge to which, in fact, no real challenge could be offered, is a mistake.

When Aneurin Bevan was appointed to the immediate post-war Labour government as Minister of Health in 1945, he was additionally allocated responsibility for housing reform. After a slow but steady start, building large, solid council houses as part of a Socialist ideal that would see professionals and labourers all living in the same street, and in the same conditions, Bevan's staunch preference for high standards over productivity proved his undoing. The Conservatives homed in on the government's house-completion record – perceived as sluggish by the turn of the decade – and their promise to build at a faster rate became a major vote-winning policy. Harold Macmillan, Bevan's successor, took the post of Minister for Housing full-time and came good on the pledge. What didn't form an explicit part of the Tory manifesto however was their use of cheaper materials and 'off-the-peg' designs, and this, in tandem with their emphasis on social housing as merely a means to an end towards home ownership, sealed the fate of the working class. The Tories' policy only served to reflect a distinct lack of desirability upon social housing – and moreover a lack of respectability; it was a segregationist tool.

In light of the political climate which preceded Northampton's expansion, perhaps it was just too simplistic to have assumed that the recruiting of a committed Socialist to the position of chief architect within the NDC would have automatically facilitated a particular sensitivity to Bevan's principle, and in turn the needs of the new town's bussed-in Londoners. Herein lies one of this story's most obscure sadnesses, a paradox characteristic of so many of the Eastern District's problems.

Birmingham-born Gordon Redfern was already familiar with the demands of new town building when he came to Northampton in June 1969. He'd made a success of his designs for the South Wales development of Cwmbran, foremost of which being a 22-storey block of flats conceived in part to satisfy the need for an architectural landmark in the town.

The heavily bearded, Lotus-driving "unconventional dresser" had also railed against "the impedimenta of capitalism" brought about by the Industrial Revolution and the spread of concomitant city slums in the Universities and Left Review some ten years previously. The housing designs Redfern had deployed for Cwmbran he transferred to his plans on the Thorplands estate in Northampton. These wedge-shaped forms, with their eyelet windows and schizoid clad fascias, were ostensibly simulations of the heavily influential Kent and Surrey estates of the Span Developments company, helmed by architect Eric Lyons. Redfern however tellingly eschewed the traditional brick building methods favoured by Lyons.

In the local press of the day, Redfern championed the new FrameForm technique, which saw prefabricated internal frames pieced together in a factory and then transported to the site for completion. The frames were plywood, and on the outside a layer of waterproof paper sheeting was added, before a finish of either brick or cladding. It was a process which, given the shortage of skilled labour, was both vastly cheaper and immeasurably faster than conventional building means; whereas the norm was to complete a house in some nine months, the new way saw that time cut by two thirds. "Although speed was an important consideration" said Redfern of Thorplands, "It was not the most important. Quality was our main concern".

In 1975, Thorplands received a 'highly commended' award for its design from the Department of the Environment. The estate's layout, a modification of the Radburn system (named after the New Jersey town of the same name, built in the 1920's with the emphasis on segregation of vehicle and pedestrian – "A town for the motor age"), saw houses of varying size and style forming cul-de-sac streets, linked by a maze of footpaths and interspersed with green public spaces. The award came as an addition to the three Civic Design gold medals Redfern attained whilst at Cwmbran, where the factory-assembled houses of Coed-Eva and Greenmeadow were praised for their insulation, and, due to the little or no water used in construction, the attendant lack of condensation experienced by initial tenants during the drying out period.

Such acclaim was inconsequential however to the Thorplands tenants who complained at the time of rising damp, mould and even toadstools growing on bathroom walls. In 1980 – just four years after the DoE commendation, awarded in part for the choice of building materials which Redfern himself had advocated – a local councillor was proposing a crash programme of repairs to the estate, citing massive cracks in wooden weatherboarding in many houses and gaps "up to an inch wide" under some front doors.

The contradictory reality of ground level misery experienced on Thorplands, and its stark disparity with the transitory lustre of certified success, did not occur in isolation. The Bellinge development, another beneficiary of national honour, saw a similarly swift decline in fortunes. In 1976 it was the winner of a national 'Save the Village Pond' award, when local ponds which had originally formed part of a quarrying site and had latterly fallen into misuse as a rubbish tip were cleared by the NDC and stocked with fish. This recognition as a beauty spot couldn't however provide a gloss on the numerous difficulties experienced on the estate. A year prior to this, at the height of the fuel crisis and in the midst of the nationwide 'Save It' campaign, one-bedroom bungalows built for the elderly on Bellinge were acclaimed for their low energy insulation and heating designs. Soon however, pensioners would admit to going without food in order to save money for their huge heating bills in these dwellings, where some ceilings were 12 feet high.

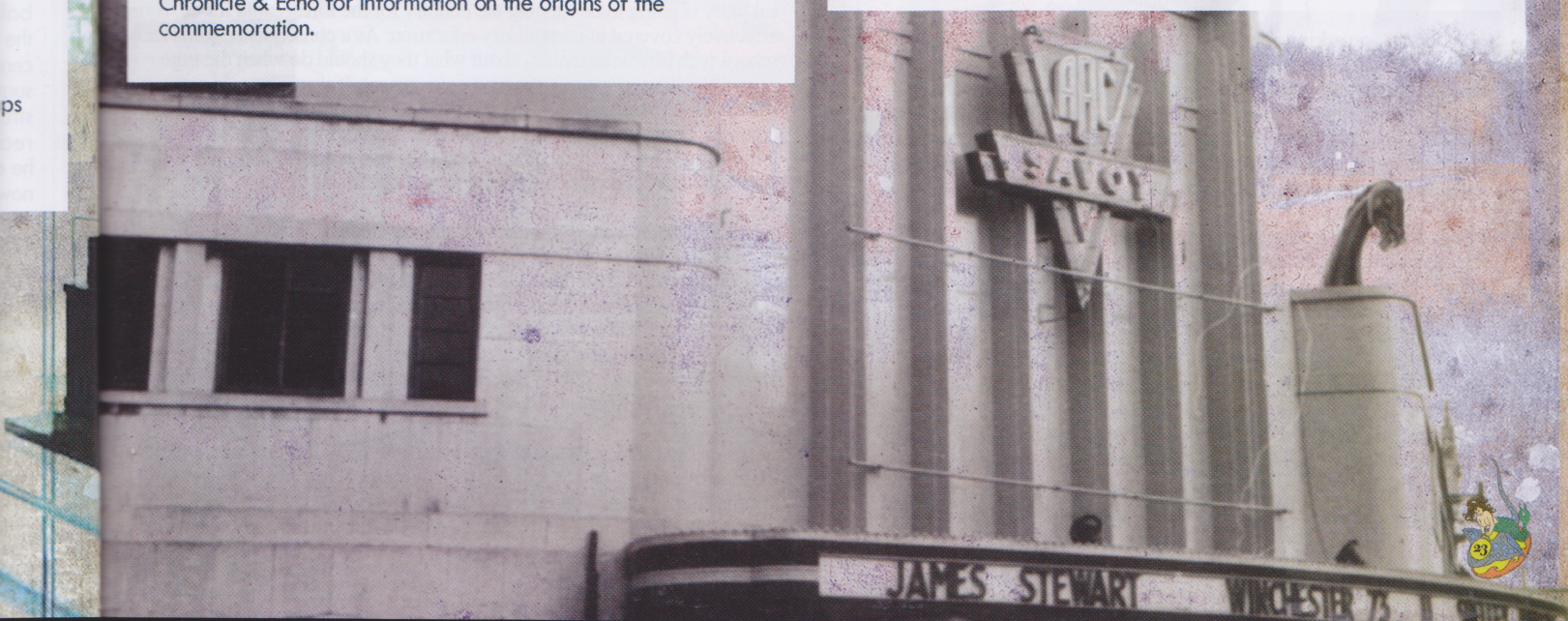
More good housing design awards were lavished upon the NDC in 1980 in the shape of further 'highly commended' credit for the development at Arlbury Road in Blackthorn, and a medal-winning triumph for phase 2A of the Southfields estate. Elsewhere on Blackthorn that same year, a series of tragic house fires led to a residents campaign and a 1,200-name petition demanding better protection against fire delivered by delegation to no. 10 Downing Street. After three subsequent reports into the safety of the timber Quikbild houses on Blackthorn, the NDC were cleared of inadequate construction, but criticised over internal stud walls, which were only 2 inches thick and provided "minimal resistance" to the spread of fire. Air vents fitted as part of the central heating systems were also found to have aided the passage of smoke and fumes. At Southfields 2A, a second accolade was presented in 1981 by the British Association of Landscape Industries for soft landscaping. Less than a year later, vandals tore up the new trees, shrubs and flowers on the estate as mounting frustration began to make its presence felt on crime figures throughout the Eastern District.

The most apposite illustration of the flimsy futility of such approbation, and its failure to bridge the ever-growing detachment cleaved between the planners and the planned, was best expressed however in the civic pride evident at Ecton Brook. In addition to the DofE medal and diploma earned for good housing design in 1978, the landscaping scheme undertaken at Ecton Brook Linear Park was awarded with a Civic Trust plaque in 1982. The plaque, re-discovered in undergrowth during a clean-up operation at the park more than 20 years later, baffled locals. One elderly member of the residents' association said, "It's just a mystery to us, because it was obviously awarded for a reason and it must belong to someone". An appeal was even launched in the Chronicle & Echo for information on the origins of the commemoration.

Contrived attempts at beautification throughout Northampton's expansion area paradoxically did almost as much to impinge upon the quality of life for the newcomers as the ill-conceived construction of the houses they lived in. As if to hammer home the rural locale and somehow depict the new estates as some kind of watercolour countryside sanctuary, in 1970 the NDC established a tree nursery specifically to provide their nascent communities with a quasi-wooded ambience. The extra heavy standard trees cultivated here helped to realise – along with the planting of large shrubs at high densities – the objective of an 'instant landscape'. The public were also invited to get involved, when in 1972 a mass planting of 70,000 daffodil bulbs took place on the banks of the Billing Brook Road.

By the early 1990s, however, this idea had only served to present yet more irritation and some considerable hazard to residents. The rampant shrubs were chosen in order to screen car parking and guide pedestrian circulation, but ended up blocking light and preventing access for cleaning to windows, obscuring road signs and street lighting and offering hideouts for vandals. Meanwhile the forest species trees favoured by the NDC – in many cases oak and ash – impeded upon parking bays and footpaths, caused paving fissures and structural damage to buildings with their roots, and coated vehicles with an immovable viscous sap. The NDC's tree nursery may have garnered a good reputation in its infancy, but what it produced was simply unsuitable and impossible to maintain. It was estimated in 2003 that to bring the Eastern District's untamed foliage under control would cost somewhere in the region of £1 million. The majority of the daffodils had long since been pulled up.

As problems with drug-related crime and anti-social behaviour reached a nadir in Northampton's new town in the late 1990s, the true cost of implementing the NDC's variation on the Radburn housing layout system was becoming apparent. The lanes and walkways that threaded the estates had now become known as 'rat-runs', easy anonymous accommodation for the thieves' getaway. Certain areas were rendered uncontrollable due to the warren-like network of paths, with one estate reckoned to contain some 300 different escape routes. In Bellinge, six-foot high iron fences were erected to block off the rat-runs in 2000, at the same time that the Radburn method of integrating the motor car into a more cohesive society, focussed on communality and assimilation, was being exposed as a disaster all around the world. In 1998, Philip Cox, the architect responsible for introducing the Radburn model to New South Wales, Australia, was quoted as saying of the Villawood suburb, "Everything that could go wrong in a society went wrong. It became the centre of drugs, it became the centre of violence and, eventually, the police refused to go into it. It was hell".





WORLD OF ILLUZION

Words: Lejorne Pindling

In the month of May this year, the media will kick into overdrive as the whole country takes part in what I would call the biggest "Reality Show" there is.

It's called the General Election. Various people I know have called it by other names (some I considered to be unprintable), but I figured that most of those opinions were from people of an older generation, who have seen elections come and go. Then I started thinking to myself, "...am I going to vote this year?" You see, this year is theoretically the first time I am eligible to vote and this made me think - like the majority of other 18-24yr olds, I care very little about the result of the General Election. I feel it wouldn't affect me in the slightest, and also I don't think my one vote would have any effect on the result. Having spoken to a number of my peers right through the ages of 16-25, the general feeling is that the youth see no point in voting because they feel as though it doesn't make a difference.

Around the 3rd of June (or just before) England, Wales and Northern Ireland will have elected another idiot who gushes nonsense (at this point, recall Tony Blair's face in '97) about various policies and says that their party has the ability, skill and determination to haul the United Kingdom out of the septic tank it was left free falling into by Blair. To be honest, Politics is not something that I pay much attention to and like many 18-24 types who should be voting later this year, I find it a little bit boring and tedious.

So it leaves you asking what are the main reasons that young people seem to have such an issue with the Government, MPs and Politics. Maybe we think it's not worth voting because politicians have been involved in numerous "incidents" over recent years (perhaps I should have swapped incidents for scandals) and are constantly coming across as untrustworthy, money hungry arseholes (loosely used), who care more about their own expenses than the running of the country.

I think it's fair to say that politicians and politics has lost the respect of the older and younger generation, and it starts long before the legal age at which you can start voting. Young people decide from around the age of 16/17 that they don't get taken seriously by their government, which stems from political parties and MPs being inaccessible to the youth.

Let's face it, Parliament isn't exactly public friendly and considering that the elections are supposed to create and sustain a democratic society, the kind of contact and communication that we have with politicians makes it seem more like a secretive society trying to control the country, and at worst a dictatorship.

The country's finances are unbalanced and unstable, and people feel unprotected by their government, but considering that we are the one that "voted" them in, we surely should have known what to expect or else why would you have voted for them? Of course realistically, all we see is the front man for a party and we have to make a decision on what they say knowing full well that when they are sealed behind closed doors, their agenda changes.

Local Councils are telling thousands of young people that they can't continue to do projects that they enjoy, because they have no more money to fund them, and on the flipside you have government officials bestowing themselves with the benefits of extraordinary expenses claims and unnecessary second homes.

How can any bankers justify receiving bonuses in excess of £10,000,000 after the public's taxes have been used to bail their arses out when the NHS can barely find a penny to spend between the 1000+ hospitals there are in the UK?

It seems that we the people live in a democratic society without real choice. Many people go unheard and the youth grow up sensing the vibe of bad government and dissent from their elders, and this increases the reluctance to vote.

Which leads me to my main point - something as important as this to young people; the decision making process that determines which nonsensical party is going to be running the country for the foreseeable future, is not effectively covered in compulsory education. As a consequence teens leave school with little information about what they should do when the time comes for them to vote for the next government. If young people were important to the various political parties that exist, I'm sure that they would consider it essential to educate the younger generation (i.e. the voters of tomorrow) - firstly a little bit about politics, and secondly about what their vote will actually do for them in the long run.

If I choose not to vote, someone will still get elected - and it may be someone far worse. So really... even though I'm not voting, I am. It seems abnormal that even if I don't vote, someone still gets in, that doesn't seem democratic. Also it might surprise people to learn that at the moment, in Great Britain, there are currently 340 political parties, all with their own policies. So given the chance this year I'd love to vote for the "Happening Happy Hippy Party" (HHHP) or how about the "Death, Dungeons and Taxes Party" (DDT).

However, as I said before - the fact is that the youth don't mean anything to the government, and as a result, the government means nothing to the youth. But this kind of apathy is what is allowing the vile, outrageous and quite frankly ridiculous entity that is Nick Griffin and his party to acquire seats in Europe.





TALES FROM PHONOGRAPHIC OCEANS... TAKE A DIP...

PART ONE BY ALEX NOVAK

ADAM AND THE ANTS

Ignore the glitzy new romantic period of PRINCE CHARMING, all flash and no substance and subsequent breakdowns - going down the pub to settle a score after jibes were made with a shot gun is not a good idea. The original ANTS were a much darker, monochrome S&M influenced combo closer to early BANSHEES, with songs that had a strong hook and ADAM as a Rocky Horror Show extra. Founded by ADAM (STUART GODDARD B.1954) at HORNSEY SCHOOL OF ART, he decided to form the ANTS at a SEX PISTOLS gig in 1976. They debuted at the ROXY in London in 1977, and their appearance in DEREK JARMAN'S punk film JUBILEE closely followed. JUBILEE captured the spirit of the times and featured JORDAN (PISTOLS/SEX SHOP) as a punk Britannia. Their first single came out via DECCA in 1978 - YOUNG PARISIANS, on the back of a reputation for being a powerful live act. Quitting DECCA because of poor promotion, they teamed up with independent DO IT, who went on to release their debut, LP DIRK WEARS WHITE SOX - all echo vox and hypnotic guitars.

A botched management deal with MALCOLM McCLAREN (ex-manager of SEX PISTOLS/ NY DOLLS) in 1979 caused members of the band to jump ship to form BOW WOW WOW. MARCO PIRONI (ex MODELS/BANSHEES) was recruited on guitar and the double drumming (Burundi style) technique was introduced. Now sporting a new pirate image and the singles KINGS OF THE WILD FRONTIER, DOG EAT DOG followed and Top of The Pops and Smash Hits beckoned.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

DIRK WEARS DARK SOX LP (DO IT 1979/CD COLUMBIA 2006)
KINGS OF THE WILD FRONTIER LP (CBS 1980)

COLLECTABLES

YOUNG PARISIANS/LADY 7" (DECCA F13803 1978) PS-paper labels £12
DIRK WEARS WHITE SOX LP (DO IT RIDE3 1979) £15

BAD FINGER

Formed in Swansea, Wales in 1966, they were one of the first acts to sign to the BEATLES fledgling record label APPLE in 1968. They initially went under the moniker of the IVEYS producing one single before they changed their name to BADFINGER in 1969. They got their first major success with a McARTNEY song COME AND GET IT, which reached no. 4 in the UK charts in 1970, and was also a hit in the USA. The track was later used in the film THE MAGIC CHRISTIAN (which starred RINGO STARR) also the title of their debut album, which was closely followed by NO DICE both in 1970. The song writing partnership of PETE HAM and TOM EVANS produced further chart success on both sides of the Atlantic, including WITHOUT YOU, which was a hit for both NILSSON (1972) and, more recently, MARIAH CAREY in 1994. Not accepted by the Progressive Rock Scene as a credible albums band, they failed to capitalise on their hit singles and felt they were not being treated by APPLE in a fair way. They joined WARNER BROTHERS in 1974, where they continued to produce BEATLES tinged melodies. Legal wrangles ensued and as a result an album was withdrawn. JOEY MOLLAND quit and tragedy followed when PETE HAM hanged himself at his London home. Reformed in 1978 and produced further albums for ELEKTRA, poor sales and royalty disputes culminated in TOM EVANS' suicide in 1983.



RECOMMENDED LISTENING

MAGIC CHRISTIAN MUSIC LP (APPLE SAPCOR12 1970) £60. NO DICE LP (APPLE SAPCOR16 1970) gatefold-£60
STRAIGHT UP LP (APPLE SAPCOR19 1972) £45. BEST OF BADFINGER CD (APPLE 1995) compilation of the four albums for Apple
BEST OF BADFINGER VOLUME 2 CD (RHINO 1990) post Apple output, plus unreleased material.

IVEYS: MAYBE TOMORROW/AND HER DADDYS A MILLIONAIRE 7" (APPLE 5 1968) £55

BADFINGER

NO MATTER WHAT/BETTER DAYS 7" (APPLE 31 1970) £18. BADFINGER LP (WARNER BROTHERS K56023 1973) with insert £60
ASS LP (APPLE SAPCOR27 1974) inner sleeve £60. WISH YOU WERE HERE LP (WARNER BROTHERS K56076 1974) withdrawn £70
APPLE OF MY EYE/BLIND OWL 7" (APPLE 49 1974) £50

CELIA AND THE MUTATIONS

CELIA was backed by a mystery new wave band, which turned out to be none other than the STRANGLERS. She produced two singles in quick succession, as good as any of the STRANGLERS material at the time, then disappeared. An explosion of new wave angst with CELIA'S disconnected vocals; the first single was a cover of a track by TOMMY JAMES AND THE SHONDELLS.

RECOMMENDED

MONY MONY/MEAN TO ME 7" (UNITED ARTISTS UP36262 1977) PS £6

YOU BETTER BELIEVE ME/ROUND AND ROUND 7" (UNITED ARTISTS UP36318 1977) PS £8



BOBBY GENTRY

Aka ROBERTA LEE STREETER, born to dirt-poor Mississippi Delta farmers of Portuguese descent in 1944, she was inspired to play when her grandmother traded a milk cow for a neighbour's piano. A self-taught musician, she was greatly influenced by her Chicksaw County woodland background. She moved to California in 1957, then Palm Springs where, after seeing the film RUBY GENTRY (a Southern pot boiler starring CHARLTON HESTON), she changed her name. Straight out of school she went on to work in Las Vegas, where she studied philosophy at UCLA and then transferred to Los Angeles Conservatory to study music. She then worked at local venues with a Hawaiian ensemble and recorded duets in 1964 with JODY REYNOLDS (famous for the death disc hit ENDLESS SLEEP in 1958). In 1967 a demo came to the attention of CAPITOL records. Included was the eerie swamp country atmospherics of ODE TO BILLIE JOE. With the support of producer DAVID AXELROD, the single MISSISSIPPI DELTA was released, but it was the flipside - BILLIE JOE - which was picked up by DJs. An edited version made no.1 in the Billboard charts pushing the BEATLES out of the top spot in late 1967. Debate raged about the subject matter of the song about a small-town apocalypse - what was thrown off the Tallahatchie bridge? ... an engagement ring apparently (right).

The ODE TO BILLIE JOE, her debut album also out in 1967, won three Grammy awards and she received many nominations. Hailed as a promising new vocalist, more albums followed - THE DELTA SWEETE, LOCAL GENTRY - but there was no chart action for any of the singles. However, she had her own series on the BBC and guested on many shows including GLEN CAMPBELL, JOHNNY CASH and BOBBY DARINS. BOBBY'S chart presence was restored with the help of fellow country-pop artist GLEN CAMPBELL. He helped to move the material into more commercial territory by 1969. Even more success followed. She set up her own publishing company, TV Production Company, and had a share in a basketball team. But her feeling of being trapped surfaced on the final album PATCHWORK in 1971. She had left her mark and wanted to move on. Occasional appearances in the interim included re-recording the song ODE TO BILLIE JOE for the film based on the story of the song, and she appeared as a guest on the TONIGHT SHOW. Since 1978 she has never performed, sung or given an interview in true Garboesque style, but she has been spotted in the local supermarket.

Recommended listening

ODE TO BILLIE JOE LP (CAPITOL (S) T2830 1967) £18
LOCAL GENTRY LP (CAPITOL (S) T2964 1968) £18
DELTA SWEETE LP (CAPITOL (S) T2842 1968) £18
BEST OF CAPITOL YEARS 2xCD (EMI 2007)

CHOCOLATE WATCH BAND

Mid '60s American West Coast garage Rock Band, cranked up wah wah, flashback lysergic blues that owed debt to the STONES, KINKS and THEM. After a short and sweet productive period between 1965-'67, they then added to the above influences, introducing fuzz-box lead, tripped-out primitive punk and raga mysticism to the melting pot. They were included on the hippie revolt movie RIOT ON SUNSET STRIP in 1967 and had some of their early material produced by FRANK ZAPPA. NO WAY OUT was their first album, and drew on STONES attitude as well as YARDBIRDS sonic fuzz - basically R&B with an acid edge including the stand out track LET'S TALK ABOUT GIRLS. A track was written by them for the 1967 film THE LOVE INS - the song itself could be seen as a bit snarly - it was a satirical look at the scene, which was shifting away from garage via acid psychedelia and taking music towards hard rock and blues. The second album INNER MYSTIQUE came out in 1968 and was a more schizophrenic affair - half R&B garage stomp and dreamy hypnotic psyche. By the time of their third album things had changed. It was a less idealistic world with drugs, politics and music confronting society, and they split in 1970. This period of garage/early psychedelic music was later compiled as the seminal collection called NUGGETS (1974) by LENNY KAYE which ignited interest in this era.

Recommended listening

NO WAY OUT LP (TOWER (S) T5098 1967) £100+ / INNER MYSTIQUE LP (TOWER ST5106 1968) £100+
ONE STEP BEYOND LP (TOWER ST5153 1969) £50+ / 44 CD (BIG BEAT 1994) compilation of more acid R&B moments
NUGGETS 2xLP (ELEKTRA K62012 1973) original artefacts from the first psychedelic era 1965-68 £45

Contact: alex@spiralarchive.com - mspace.com/spiralarchiverecords





DECADES OF DECADENCE

IT BEGAN WITH A RED WAISTCOAT, ENDED WITH A YELLOW BOOK,
AND THE GREEN FAIRY PUT IN SEVERAL APPEARANCES.
STEVE MOORE INTRODUCES THE RAINBOW WORLD OF THE DECADENTS ...

For most people, mentioning the Decadents conjures up images of bohemian London in the 1890s, of Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley; but the trouble with Decadence is that the whole thing sort of rots away round the edges somehow, melting messily into other artistic and literary movements of the time like Symbolism, Aestheticism and Romanticism. Some days it must have been hard to remember which particular "ism" you belonged to, though Realism certainly wouldn't have been anywhere on the list. Well, who needs Realism anyway?

So let's start with the flash geezer in the red waistcoat. He's Théophile Gautier, creating a sensation in that lurid vest at the Parisian opening night of Victor Hugo's Romantic drama *Hernani* in 1830 and setting himself on a notorious path to literary celebrity: The classic cross-dressing lesbian novel *Mademoiselle de Maupin* among the voluminous and often racy fiction, travel-writing, plays, poetry, even ballets, including *Giselle*, Gautier penned them all. And actually he was a bit of a Romantic to start with, too ... after all, when the love of his life, ballerina Carlotta Grisi, turned him down, he promptly married her sister, singer Ernestina. Romantics do that sort of thing.

A reaction to scientific rationality and the Industrial Revolution, Romanticism emphasised emotion, intuition and the power of imagination. Where Gautier had problems was that most Romantics were humanitarians who also thought that Art (be that painting, literature, drama or whatever) should be politically or morally useful. Gautier wasn't having that, so he pretty much single-handedly invented the Aesthetic movement, arguing that beauty and usefulness were mutually exclusive ("The most useful place in a house is the lavatory") and pretty much coining the group's catchphrase, "art for art's sake."

Still, our boy Théophile didn't spend all his time thinking about art and ballerinas. Around the time of the scarlet waistcoat affair, he was one of the Young Turks in the Bouzingo, a literary and artistic circle who sound, with their Cossack boots and blue-and-pink capes with pearl buttons, just about the most dandified bunch of dudes you're ever likely to meet. True or not, the Bouzingo put it about that they held parties where clothes were banned and wine was drunk from human skulls, or stood around on street corners squeezing out noises from musical instruments they didn't know how to play; all intended to *épater la bourgeoisie*, or "startle the middle-classes". Well, boys will be boys ...





Among Gautier's fellow Bouzingoists was his friend, the poet and author Gérard de Nerval, who was noted for taking his pet lobster Thibault for walks on a long blue lead ("it does not bark, and it knows the secrets of the sea ...") before finally bugging out completely in 1855 and hanging himself from a railing with a strap that he believed to be the garter of the Queen of Sheba.

Both Gautier and de Nerval were also members of the Club des Hashischins, who met each month in the Île Saint-Louis in the 1840s. There, a certain Dr. Moreau administered teaspoonfuls of a jam-like green hashish-conservative to the intellectual and artistic elite of Paris, reducing them not to half-animal monster-men but to giggling visionaries having hallucinations that sound extraordinarily psychedelic by comparison to the effects of 21st century dope. And they generally had an excellent dinner besides.

Also an occasional guest at the club was Charles Baudelaire, another Dandy whose poetry collection *Les Fleurs du mal* ("Flowers of Evil") was considered the quintessence of unwholesomeness when published in 1857, with its emphasis on sex and death; it was prosecuted as an offence against public morals and six poems were removed. The first translator into French of Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire had a long and stormy affair with his Haitian Creole mistress, Jeanne Duval, the "Black Venus"; an unusually risqué move for the time. Yet when Gautier described Baudelaire's work, shortly after his death in 1867, aged 46, he provided us with a near-perfect definition of Decadent writing ...

"... which is no other thing than Art arrived at that point of extreme maturity that determines civilisations which have grown old; ingenious, complicated, clever, full of delicate tints and refinements, gathering all the delicacies of speech, borrowing from technical vocabularies, taking colour from every palette, tones from all musical instruments, forcing itself to the expression of the most elusive thoughts, contours vague and fleeting, listening to translate subtle confidences, confessions of depraved passions and the odd hallucinations of a fixed idea turning to madness."

After pretty much creating both Aestheticism and the French Decadent movement, Gautier finally shuffled off in 1872, leaving the stage clear for the poets Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud, a sort of Laurel-and-Hardy knockabout act based on absinthe, verse, gay sex and guns.

Absinthe was known colloquially as the "green fairy" mentioned in the introduction, and was very much the drink of choice for Aesthetes and Decadents on both sides of the Channel. But the absinthe of the late 19th century was rather different to that found on sale today. Yes, the alcohol content's much the same (70%), but because of modern health and safety concerns, the wormwood flavouring, now classified as a nerve poison causing hallucinations and convulsions, has been reduced to near-homeopathic quantities. Which is why you can buy absinthe in Asda these days: no one cares that it's almost neat alcohol, but the idea of going back to the Victorian "Green Hour" (usually two hours, from 5:30 to 7:30), when literary gents would gather for an aperitif of two or three absinthes before staggering off to hallucinate over dinner and write it down afterwards ... well, that would never do, would it?

So, there's a bit of a green mist around the Verlaine and Rimbaud double-act. It all kicks off in 1871. There's Verlaine in Paris, an established Decadent/Symbolist poet, married little more than a year, when 17-year old, blue-eyed boy super-poet Arthur Rimbaud turns up on his doorstep. It's love at first sight, and by the following year they elope together to Camden Town in London, where they teach French, quarrel drunkenly and play with knives. The following year, Verlaine can't take any more and goes home to Paris, which turns out to be no fun without Rimbaud. So they meet for reconciliation in Brussels, where they quarrel again and a stinking-drunk Verlaine shoots Rimbaud in the wrist. Rimbaud doesn't press charges, but Verlaine still goes to jail for two years anyway. While he's in there, he converts to Catholicism, which sounds as if it might be taking the repentance angle a bit far.

By the time he's out, Rimbaud has given up writing and is heading for foreign parts, eventually washing up in Ethiopia as a successful gun-runner before dying of cancer at 37. Verlaine keeps writing poetry and gets a job teaching English in a French boy's school. Inevitably, he falls in love with one of the pupils, who eventually dies of typhoid, and after that it's pretty much the gutter, bumming drinks in the cafés of Paris and following Rimbaud five years later. That's another thing we'll notice about the Decadents as we go along: The survival rate isn't exactly great.

Anyway, after the tragicomic double-act warm-up, we get to the main event on the stage of French Decadence, which is Joris-Karl Huysmans and his novel *À Rebours* (*Against the Grain* or *Against Nature*). This was a bit of a surprising career-move on Huysmans' part, because all his previous novels had been firmly in the Naturalist school. Then suddenly in 1884 comes *Against the Grain*, which is hardly a novel at all, more a handbook of Decadence. Its single character is the archetypal Decadent Duc Jean des Esseintes, its chapters providing a catalogue of the reclusive aesthete's interests, from perfumes to obscure theology, hothouse flowers to Late Latin literature, haute cuisine to visionary artists teetering on the edge of madness, and an enthusiasm for other Decadent writers of the day. There's essentially no plot, but anyone wanting to know "what's Decadence about?" should look no further. Needless to say, the book was loved and hated in about equal measure, depending on what particular literary fan-club the reviewer belonged to. One thing it certainly did was startle the middle-classes ...

Huysmans followed this with *Là-Bas* (*Down There*), a novel of black masses and Satanic cults in the heart of Paris, which left the middle-classes asking uneasily: Could it all be true? And then he followed this up with a series of novels chronicling his conversion to Catholicism. Do we detect another trend here? Yes, we do.

If Huysmans was the big name of the day, there were of course many other French writers at the Decadent/Symbolist interface who deserve a mention, even if we don't have the space to deal with them as they fully deserve. Merry prankster Alfred Jarry, inventor of the curious pseudoscience 'pataphysics, author of the outrageously scatological (at the time) and surreal *Ubu Roi* plays, and devoted cyclist; Jarry also gave us the splendid Decadent slogan: "Be mysterious. Be in love." The Count Auguste Villiers de l'Isle Adam, living in poverty after his father ruined the family searching for the treasures of the Knights of Malta, author of the play *Axel*, which concludes with the hero and heroine having found both each other and the family treasure and deciding to kill themselves because the future couldn't possibly match their magnificent dreams ("Living? Our servants will do that for us."),

while Adam himself married his illiterate housekeeper on his deathbed, thus legitimising their son and allowing him to inherit the family title. Jean Lorrain, the openly gay ether-drinker with a fascination for masks. Pierre Louÿs, renowned for the sensual and lesbian themes in his writing, who eventually retired from the public gaze to write some of the filthiest pornography imaginable, purely for his own pleasure. Rachilde, a rare female Decadent author, whose yellow shoes Jarry wore to a funeral; the poet Stéphane Mallarmé, and many more.

With so many authors of such varied interests, it becomes a little difficult to describe a typical Decadent. Often a Dandy who basked in public attention, he was fond of absinthe, opium and other stimulants to creativity, while his sexual interests frequently took him far from the straight-and-narrow. Always fond of the passing show, he would both frequent and write about the music halls of the day; also admiring the vast Romantically-staged theatre of actress Sarah Bernhardt, the nymphomaniac celebrity superstar who performed her plays all over the world (but only in French), and the then-controversial mythological operas of Richard Wagner. Religiously, he was, or would probably turn Catholic, preferring its mediaevalist ritualism to the mundanity of Protestantism. Artistically, he favoured the jewelled Symbolist paintings of Gustave Moreau or the lush decoration of Art Nouveau. Preferring artificiality to nature, the Decadent praised cosmetics over natural beauty, hothouse flowers grown with great difficulty over those from the garden, and the ornately-decorated turn of a gem-like phrase to the everyday dullness of plain speaking. And if that writing startled the middle-classes, so much the better. It certainly got up conservative British noses.

Generally speaking, the Decadent movement in England (or more exactly, in London, which was pretty much where it all happened) got off to a later start than in France, which pretty much confirmed the national prejudice that all forms of naughtiness originate on the other side of the Channel. Even so, we did have a couple of our own forerunners, knocking around at about the same time as Théophile Gautier.

There was Dante Gabriel Rossetti, founder member of the Pre-Raphaelite art movement, painter of sensually-stylised mediaeval women and writer of lush seductive verse. Married to Victorian artistic supermodel Lizzie Siddal, he had one of those poetic turns when she overdosed on laudanum and decided to bury his unpublished verse in her coffin. Writer's block inevitably followed, so eventually he dug her up again so he could get his poems back. About the same time, he also developed an obsession with wombats, owning two and inviting his friends to visit him at his "Wombat's Lair" in Chelsea. Soon the garden was full of kangaroos, laughing jackasses, peacocks, armadillos and racoons. The neighbours, not surprisingly, began to complain ...

We also had flagellant midget toff Algernon Charles Swinburne, a carrot-topped gay alcoholic whose sexually-charged verse about "strange disease and sin" earned him an accolade from one journal for being "unclean for the sake of uncleanness", and also brought him a letter from Dublin, threatening castration. Being a poet was so much more interesting, back then ...

Curiously, the most influential early figure on the English Aesthetic and Decadent movements was a balding, moustachioed Oxford don, Walter Pater, a bright Stepney boy made good. With interests ranging through Classical Greek and Renaissance Italy, handsome young men and art theory, Pater's 1873 collection of essays *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* doesn't sound promising. But the "Conclusion" to the first edition (suppressed in the second) presented Pater's completely amoral aesthetic theory of art for its own sake and a passionate involvement with the experience of the moment, uniting all one's vital forces. "To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy," wrote Pater, "is success in life." And a generation of young English poets and writers agreed with his every word, wherever that burning flame should lead them.

The English movement really gets going, however, with the Rhymers' Club, a literary dining and drinking club that met in an upstairs room at the *Cheshire Cheese* pub in Fleet Street, where the bright young things of the Decadent New Wave would gather to smoke clay pipes and read their latest verse to one another. Founded in 1890 by Ernest Rhys and W. B. Yeats, the latter still in his pre-Irish Nationalist days, it produced only two small volumes of verse, but the membership basically was English Decadence.

Probably the most tragic was poet Ernest Dowson, son of suicidal parents, falling in love in a Soho Polish restaurant with the owner's 11-year-old daughter and deciding to wait until she was legal, visiting her devotedly for the next five years; at which point she promptly married the tailor who lived above the restaurant. After that, it was absinthe, tuberculosis, ten penny whores, and gone at 32. As Dowson himself said: "They are not long, the days of wine and roses ..."

Other members included Oscar Wilde and his handsome toy-boy, Lord Alfred Douglas; John Gray, said to be the model for Wilde's *Dorian Gray* and off to join the Catholics soon after; Lionel Johnson, gone after a bar-stool fall aged 35; the bouffant-haired Richard le Gallienne; opiated street-vagrant Francis Thompson and Arthur Symons, pretty much the spokesman and organiser who also brought the ageing Paul Verlaine over for an English tour shortly before his death.

Many of these poets were published by John Lane's Bodley Head press, and in 1894 Lane brought out one of the quintessential magazines of the Decadent 90s, *The Yellow Book*, an anthology of literature, poetry and art edited by Henry Harland. The art director and main illustrator was Art Nouveau superstar Aubrey Beardsley, recently come to fame for his disturbing illustrations to Oscar Wilde's play *Salomé*. Perhaps the most famous piece of Decadent theatre, *Salomé* was originally written in French with the intention that 35-year-old Sarah Bernhardt should play the teenage hussy of the title, which would probably have been something to see; but it never happened. The play was translated into English by Alfred Douglas, but promptly banned from London theatres on the convenient excuse that it was illegal at the time to put Biblical material on the stage.

Wilde himself was a relentless self-promoter who'd already made a celebrity name for himself as the apostle of the Aesthetic movement, mainly by dressing like a Dandy, growing his hair long and being a brilliant conversationalist, even touring the Wild West and lecturing tough cowboys on the finer points of interior design. His single novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, is heavily influenced by Huysmans in its catalogue of Decadent delights, but he also produced beautifully written short stories, essays, poetry and, of course, the plays for which he's best remembered today.

It was at the height of his fame as a playwright that Wilde's and Lord Alfred Douglas' dalliance with handsome young men led to an infamous court case in 1895 that saw Wilde condemned to two year's hard labour for gross indecency, a punishment from which he never recovered, either physically or creatively.

At the time of his arrest, Wilde picked up a French novel to take with him; and French novels of a slightly racy nature were given yellow dust-jackets. Needless to say, the press, with their usual wilful ignorance, declared that Wilde had been arrested while carrying "*The Yellow Book*", even though he'd never written for it, and that was pretty much it for English Decadence. Beardsley, having been associated with Wilde through *Salomé*, was promptly sacked as art editor of *The Yellow Book*, and though it limped on until 1897 the contents were suddenly cleaned up. And an awful lot of Decadent writers suddenly started calling themselves Symbolists.

There was one last fling, thanks largely to publisher and pornographer Leonard Smithers, who made it a point of pride to publish material that others wouldn't touch. So a number of John Lane's authors transferred their work to him, including Ernest Dowson and Arthur Symons, and in 1896 Smithers brought out the short-lived but even more decadent magazine, *The Savoy*. Edited by Symons and with Beardsley on board as art editor once more (as well as contributing chapters from his unfinished but lushly pornographic novel *Under the Hill*), it provided a final brief flourish, but failed to last a year. Tuberculosis took Beardsley in 1898; Dowson and Wilde went in 1900. All three had converted to Catholicism before they died. And that was pretty much that.

So what are we left with? Well, mainly the literature, an awful lot of which remains in print, especially that of leading lights like Wilde and Huysmans. Not surprisingly in these days when most adults prefer to read children's novels, Decadent literature's often written off as "purple prose", though some of us actually like their reading heavily-tinted. If you're not a fan already, buy yourself a dictionary and get stuck into some of the authors mentioned here; you may actually be astonished by the possibilities opened up by writing with a full vocabulary.

And anyway, in a world so obsessed with economic production that it's probably going to end up as a roasting fireball within a matter of decades, what's the point of *not* being a Decadent? We may as well all put on our glad-rags and best make-up, bow on and off the stage with an enormous poetical flourish and live with that hard gem-like flame ... and just make our lives into art ...

Purely for art's sake, of course ...



QUEEN TAKES BISHOP!

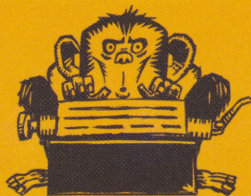
TEN GREAT CHESS MOVES IN
1980s SCI-FI ACTION MOVIES

YOUR FREE WALLCHART

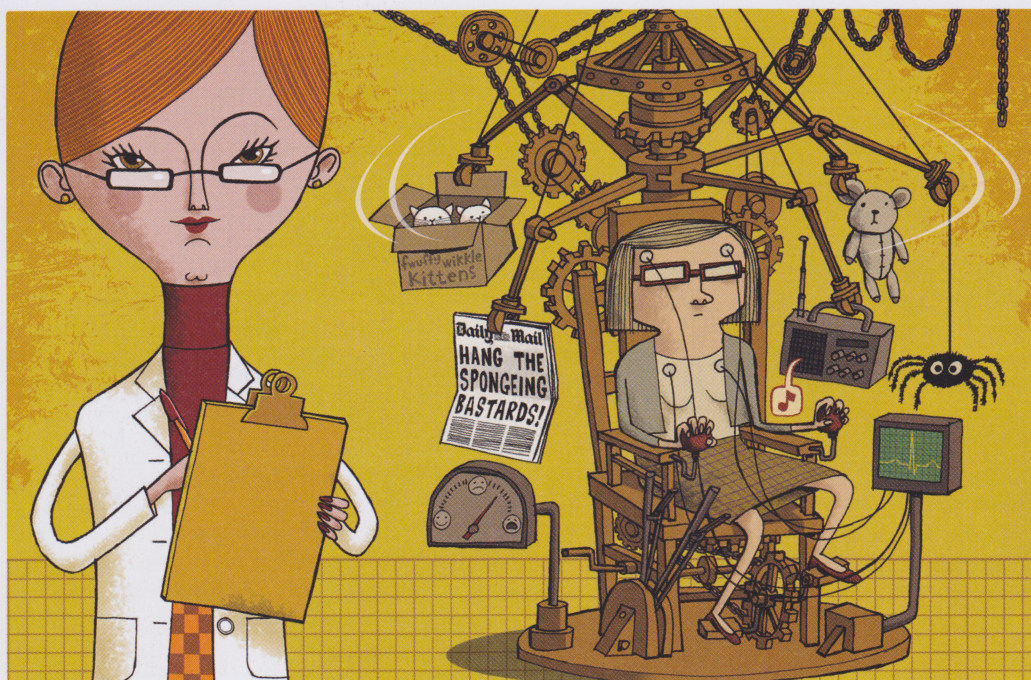


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NORTHAMPTON EDITION



Kittens and talk radio could solve energy crisis

'Impossible' machine runs on human emotions



Quincy Savage
Oxbridge

Dr Felicity DaVinci, who has MAs in Engineering, Psychology and Anthropology, claims to have invented a new type of energy generator.

The inspiration came to her during an experiment to test the power of *Forever Friends* greeting cards, where she was measuring readers' emotional responses via their pupil dilation and increased heartbeat.

DaVinci noticed that the pictures of fluffy clouds and wide-eyed kittens were creating extremely high levels of emotional response.

"I theorised that by selecting the right set of positive and negative response-generating material and

controlling the presentation of these to a highly receptive user, we could access an untapped source of energy," she explained.

So DaVinci set about designing a machine that could be operated (or 'fuelled' – there is some debate here) by a volunteer seated at its axis.

She then spent a month building the apparatus from parts salvaged from skips or purchased on eBay.

The machine's trial run, using a typist from Croydon and a celebrity gossip mag, created an energy

'The machine is operated (or 'fuelled' – there is some debate) by the volunteer seated at its axis.'

spike that blew light bulbs across a half-mile radius, with DaVinci triumphantly declaring: "We have converted *Heat* into electricity!"

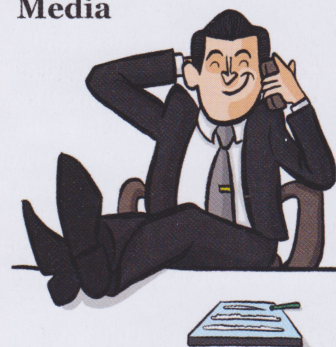
Further tests have yielded levels of energy comparable with the National Grid, using only teddy bears, airport novels, *Daily Mail* headlines, Athena posters, a big rubber spider, some kittens and old episodes of Simon Bates' *Our Tune*.

"This invention builds upon the work of my ancestor Leonardo," said Dr DaVinci. "As an artist, he dealt with the emotions; and as an inventor with the practical world.

My breakthrough was to combine the two to create the world's first self-fuelling mechanism: the fabled perpetual emotion machine."

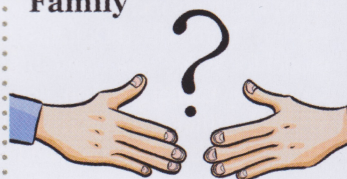
Don't give money to
marketing people
'They'll only spend
it on drugs'

Media



Should left-handed
and right-handed
people marry?

Ambidexterous kids
struggle to fit in
Family



Treacherous road
executed
Society



Business



EAT brand inspires copycats

New companies follow lead of straightforwardly named sandwich chain



Emily Veganburger
Hackney, London

The success of London sandwich chain *EAT* seems to have inspired the branding of new companies in the public convenience and retirement home sectors.

In a *Daily Mustard* exclusive, we spoke to the owners of Swedish portaloo business *Shit* and retirement home business *DIE*.

Mr Lamby, owner of *DIE* (Dignity for the Incapacitated and Elderly), told us that he hadn't thought about what the acronym would be when he launched the company.

"When somebody first spotted it, I was horrified. I thought we'd have to remove all the signs and pulp the stationary, all at huge cost.

But instead we decided to embrace the logo and run with it, showing ourselves to be a dynamic,

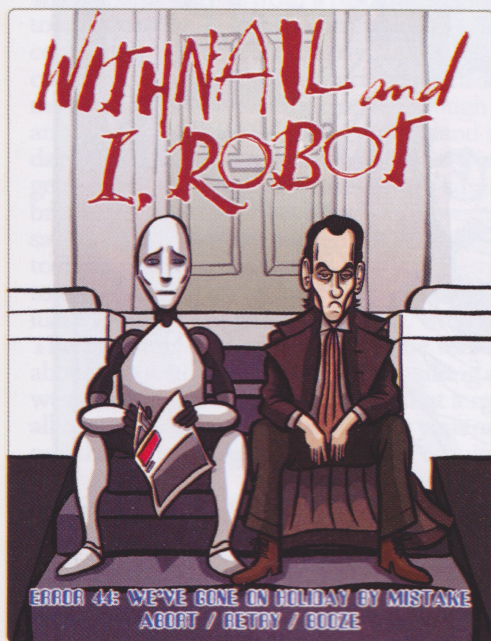
'Research shows that British people appreciate no-nonsense names for their services'

forthright brand, with a sense of humour about ourselves."

For *Shit*, however, the plan was there all along. As their owner told us, "research shows that British people really appreciate straight-

forward, no-nonsense names for their services. Our toilets are clean, efficient and moderately priced, and with our unambiguous logo stamped on the side, they are easy to find on a crowded high street, or late at night whilst intoxicated."

He also announced that, following *Shit*'s huge success, they plan to launch complimentary public bathing and barber businesses called *Shower* and *Shave*. ■



Puzzle corner

Where's Wally Wordsearch



W	L	L	A	W	A	L	L	L
A	L	W	L	A	W	Y	A	W
W	W	L	W	A	L	L	A	Y
A	A	Y	Y	L	W	Y	W	L
L	L	W	A	Y	L	A	A	A
Y	Y	A	L	W	L	A	L	W
L	L	L	Y	L	L	W	Y	W
L	W	A	Y	A	A	W	A	L
W	L	Y	W	L	L	A	L	Y

by Michael Everett

“A thick soup obscured my view; croutons floated slowly past my nose. Once again, it seemed, I had fallen asleep during lunch...”

Continuing our exclusive excerpts from *Derring Dos & Don'ts*, the memoirs of Col D John Coleman

Weekend magazine



log us into your interpod:



myface



spacebook



fritter

"nobody believes there's nothing to believe in..." Kerouac

Antar



Back row, Left to right . Jack Micheline - Gregory Corso - Melinda Gebbie - Harold Norse - Bob Kaufman

Middle row. S. Clay Wilson - Vale Hamanika - Jack Hirschman - Janis Blue - Michael McClure

Front Row. Lawrence Ferlinghetti - Jack Kerouac - Allen Ginsberg - Kenneth Patchen

BARBARY COASTERS

PART ONE: I WENT TO THE CITY...



From pirate sanctuary to foggy moral maze for Dashiell Hammett's private eyes to wander lost in, melting-pot of movements that the Beats, the Hippies and the Punks emerged from, San Francisco looms up disproportionately large in counter-cultural mythology. In the first half of an illuminating two-part feature, Dodgem Logic's enigmatic émigré Melinda Gebbie takes us on an expedition through a real gone world.

**I went to the city and there I did weep
Men are crowin' like asses and livin' like sheep
Oh I can't hold the hand of my love
Can't hold her little white hand
Yes I went to the city and there I did bitterly cry
Men out of touch with the earth
With never a glance at the sky
Oh can't hold the hand of my love
Can't hold her little pure hand**

Kenneth Patchen (1911 – 1972)

Have you ever been to San Francisco? It's on the western tip of America, all along the upper torso of the Pacific Ocean, down from the cool mountain range of Shasta's gentle peaks and in one continuous rolling motion the coast unfurls like a blue-green staircase onto the sea.

A man or woman could once do whatever the hell he or she wanted to do on the Barbary Coast. It was where sun-crazed gold miners spent their nugget money on wild hoors, fancy brothels with tassel-curtained dining rooms where you could dab your foul beard with real linen table napkins and after a bellyful of French wine and venison, topped off by oysters caught locally, you could chase as many girls as you could pay for around a velvet settee until they let you catch 'em.

Businesses were made up, gambled on and squandered. Life was but a dream. The fortunes you lost today could be recovered tomorrow. There were no rules of conduct and any self-appointed lunatic could create his own following. Take Emperor Norton for instance, a man whose name derives from a place-name meaning 'north town'. Possibly he was the first person in America to completely fabricate an identity for himself, with a convenient line of royalty which originated in his own mind. Large and beefy, he strutted through the streets of an 1860s Yerba Buena ('good grass') Island in the early days of its Christian association with St. Francis, the gentle saint of all animals; dressed in a large feathered hat, brocade waistcoat, velvet breeches, gloves, and on his say-so he used money printed with his own likeness on it to conduct his business with. No one questioned him as to either his lineage or the viability of his idiosyncratic lucre. He has been nearly forgotten, which is just as well. The American government would be very concerned about that kind of maniac thinking taking over not just a western outpost of capitalism, but that it might catch fire all over corporate America. Making your own money is one thing – printing it in your image is quite another.

San Francisco has always been considered to be on the lunatic fringe of the American Way of Life. While model citizens from Cleveland Ohio or St. Louis Missouri are happy working for the man and daydreaming about a summer vacation or a new three-piece suit, San Franciscans have historically found it their duty to move the cultural goalposts. Perhaps it's because so many dreamers from the tide-pools of respectability, when they dream of escaping the daily grind, would imagine a whole new way of life awaiting them under the mauve clouds, on the almost phantom bridge of dreams, the Golden Gate.

Every postcard of the city, whether it was the early sepia-tone shots of rosy Chinese children daubed in Technicolor inks against the turquoise skies and bright red curving lines of archways, green-tiled roofs and golden dragons twelve feet high; or the voluptuous purples and russets of bathing beauties in yellow swimming suits posing before gigantic grapefruits and oranges, symbolising the fruitful heat of citrus groves and movie-star land, only a few miles away from the little cable cars climbing halfway to the stars, down to the Victorian Ladies, the multicolour painted wooden buildings which still to this day line a fair few streets in the old neighbourhoods all call with fervour to those who want to climb the flowered stairs of Lombard Street or walk through the same woods that Kim Novak strolled dreamily through in *Vertigo* in 1955. Shop for flowers at Podesta Baldocchi, eat dinner at the top of the Mark Hopkins, or even, more darkly, experience the fatal thrill of jumping from that beautiful bridge to end a life which couldn't stand up to a failed romantic dream...

The beige and moss coloured towns, the white picket fences; dusty storefronts and samey cafés – the puritan neutrals of tidy living; offices decorated in the indistinct tones of a sandstorm. Do not disturb us in our slumber. America was dreamwalking in the '50s, the will silent, the soul drenched in ash. Sales pitch on the move. The mighty gizmo, the key to tomorrow, the greenback dollar covered in stern gazes from the unknowable purveyors of a plot against genuine individualism, which only wanted time and had to be curbed with sharp angles of dogma, conveniently supplied by one of the only unmitigated sources of colour during those times, the blazing blues, greens, reds and yellows of doctrinarian storytelling, the local church windows, full of blood and suffering and half-nude men and crying, half-hidden women; father figures wielding swords against their children and lambs of sacrifice waiting mildly for their lives to end at the hand of the man with the plan.

But San Francisco has never been a puritanical landscape. It housed no real businesses. Its biggest business has always been entertainment, and fantasy and its curves well suited the voluptuous mind of the poet and artist.

Much like its European counterpart Paris, San Francisco (Norton was the first to enact an edict forbidding the use of the word 'Frisco' as a substitute) became the designated dreamscape belonging to music, art and poetry for the whole of the United States. Of course, there was culture on the East Coast as well, but it could thrive more easily in a gentler Petri dish, one not so crowded or abrasive as New York.

In San Francisco one could always stroll through the neighbourhoods picking up culture in happy bites. As corporate identity began to rear its brillecreamed head and dictate the statistical divisions of the buying populace, its chose as its favourite places the cities where big business concerns flourished. New York had Madison Avenue. London, Paris, Chicago, each of these cities housed major brand-name companies, not to mention large publishing houses, TV networks, shipping industries, factories, offices with fancy logos.

As a teenager I went on a class tour with fellow students and our art teacher Mr. Boussy to see the local birthplace of the Beats, North Beach. My most vivid memory was the Old Spaghetti Factory on Green Street, the former 'Bocce Ball' where Italian immigrants had for several generations played a mysterious game which I half remember looking like some kind of pachinko played with little black cannonballs. The Spaghetti Factory was a wonder to my eyes. Chairs of every description hung from the roof, and everywhere on the walls, on the tables, even on the floor and ceiling were written rambling, continuous lines of poetry, all with narrow paintbrush strokes in either red or black paint.



It looked as if a glossolalic fugue had taken over the local pasta enthusiasts and before they could finish their clam linguini. These unfortunate diners would be moved, like zombies, to drag brush across surface to complete a four-stanza paean to a random cluster of incoming sensations before they could sluggishly order a double espresso and pay to get out of this limbo. The power of words had encased and surrounded us. Even as I struggled with my meatballs I did my best to read every line I could swallow before returning across the bridge to Mill Valley, population 7,629.

The most important part of the San Francisco beat movement, however, was City Lights bookstore, the first paperback-only shop in America. And the most pivotal characters of the Beat movement were Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and Lawrence Ferlinghetti. Allen brought fame to City Lights when the second shipment, coming from England, of his book *HOWL* was seized, and on the grounds of obscenity the shopkeeper known locally as 'Shig' was arrested.

The trial ran for a month, from August 16th to September 13th, 1957. Judge Clayton Horn ruled that *HOWL* was not obscene and, setting a precedent for future books by D.H. Lawrence and Henry Miller (*Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Tropic of Cancer*), he declared that a book with the slightest redeeming social importance guarantees that book protection by the First Amendment – freedom of speech. As a professional pornographer, I thank Judge Horn for his sensible and forward-thinking attitudes.

San Francisco has always loved its rebels. Ginsberg was also a notorious and flamboyant person sexually, and again, San Francisco never gave a damn about that. And why should it? Any metropolis that looks down on those who are different will never produce a bountiful harvest of culture. All sorts of wildflowers grew and prospered in the rich soil of eccentricity, so rarely cultivated anywhere else in the U.S.A.

Local poets were coming out its ears. Janis Blue, Gregory Corso, Bob Kaufman, Jack Micheline, and the beat message, that of the illuminated loner, the tramp on the street with his face to the stars, the down and out but not hopeless soul, continued as a movement until it melded almost seamlessly with the beginnings of the new hip culture...

***Permanently lost, but more so
Down on the Isle of Corso
Where the Allen HOWLS
His broken-hearted vowels
And his rage at the New Yawk
Flawshow
And the North Beach scene's
All torso
Full of glitter and contortio
But a poet's stream of
Perpetual dream
Ululates on a bed which
Remains unseen by the
Naked eye in a place so green
That the haze it creates
Disinfects the beam from a
Corporate eye which controls the meme
Of the Citified Self
As it struts obscene
On the balancing beam
Over Subterranean ice floes.***

"San Francisco put on a show for me. I saw her across the bay. From the great road that bypasses Sausalito and enters the Golden Gate Bridge...this gold and white acropolis rising wave on wave against the blue of the Pacific sky was a stunning thing, a painted thing...which can never have existed...the evening fog rolled like herds of sheep coming to cote in the golden sky. She leaves a mark."

John Steinbeck, *Travels with Charley*, 1962.

A plaque on Robert Frost Plaza, from the one hundredth anniversary of his birth on March 22nd, 1974, reads

**"Such was life in the Golden Gate:
Gold dust all we drank and ate
And I was one of the children told
We all must eat our peck of gold."**

Literary luminaries came and went. The Keystone Corner was the last jazz venue in town. Beat went along with Bop, and Bebop was the heartbeat of the subterranean culture of those who sought beatitude. In a city with so many beautiful hills, limned in miraculously changeable cloudbanks, it was easy, it was exquisite, to be poor and gifted, to be searching for the inner lamp-glow of truth. What a place to escape from the rat-race to! The clang of the trolleys, the liquid gold of the beautiful cityscape, the floating sound of bass rhythms, a soaring sax solo, fulgent guitar, the young, the talented, the restless in the childlike green patchwork of North Beach, next to its pristine church, as they mingled, laughed, evolved the passionate language of the paeans, drank red wine, ate poor-mouth happy at group bean-feasts or spaghetti nights, the children of the road, the page, the cup, the one night only tango were comingling in a setting made for dreams.

But one does not age well in the City of Dreams, not when the declaration of "I am a poem, therefore everything I see belongs to me" becomes no longer the food of love, or inspiration, and those who were most inspired are not able to sustain themselves any longer with readings, as venues change their tastes. And wine garbles the brain and the poet finds he can longer write a coherent line.

In 1980 I went with a girlfriend to sit on the steps of the church in North Beach (don't ask me the name of it – I can never remember church names) and there we encountered a man he had been stalking for over two years, the elusive Gregory Corso. If you want to know what his poetry was like, check out the care-bear haired 'Dick Shawn' in the original film of *The Producers* - he looked and sounded exactly like Corso in his early days.

But life had grabbed G.C by the throat and given him a helluva throttle by the time I met him. He lay supine on the warm white steps, holding forth in his sixth decade about what great screws hunchbacks were. Tasha eyed him adoringly, as did about six other women, young and old. He was half in pyjamas and his voice carried throughout the little square of green as if he were still onstage.

"You haven't lived till you've fucked a hump-backed woman." The women all smiled feebly, seemingly in a trance. "They're just so fucking grateful! And that hump, that hump, you can really grab a hold of it with both hands and give yourself a helluva ride!" I left Tasha sitting there and went for a coffee at the Trieste, wondering if he'd always been an asshole.



There was a party for the old beats. I believe it was at La Pantera, where on a public day or evening you could get a beautifully cheap meal, sitting at long tables communally with other diners and ordering the one set meal featured that day. The tables had been put into the corners of the room and the benches in a large circle. Bread and margarine, black beans or spaghetti served with the obligatory Italian red wine, and Bob Kaufman, who had remained silent for over twelve years as a protest against the government, was there with his saintly wife. Still a handsome man, he was practically in his cups and sporting a head bandage. Janis Blue was there, dressed in a blue dress and hat. Bob hadn't written anything since Golden Sardines, and that had been years before. Jack Micheline was there of course, babbling incoherently, and I often wondered what his poetry had been like before he got to be simply a name from the old days. I'd never come across a book of his work, although he was very friendly with the underground cartoonists who frequented Dick's Bar, down in the Mission District.

I remember sitting with him in the Café Flor, a gay coffeehouse at the top of the hill in the Castro District one day, with another guy who wanted to meet me because of my comix. "Don't mess with Gebbie, man. She'll grind you into dog-food!" he'd roared, jovially. I was flattered he even knew who I was.

He'd been in a lot of the beat photographs with Ferlinghetti and Ginsberg and Michael McClure, but I came across a book of photographic portraits done by a man whose son owns a bagel shop in the Mission and there, in colour, undated, is a picture titled only "Jack" and the following quote:

"Here's a man who created 1,500 paintings and written fourteen books and most of it's unpublished...I feel I've missed out by not being able to relate to the bourgeoisie. Very few people can communicate in the modern day because the media controls communication...A lot of people said I shoulda been a rock star, 'cause I had the talent. Anybody really creative has music in them".

"I'm a fool – but better to be a fool than a hard-nosed motherfucker..."

I can only assume Jack has become what is politely called a street person, someone who is either homeless or living in a one-room wino hotel. Hope I'm wrong. He's one of the last of the Old Ones.

In 1981, William Burroughs came to San Francisco via an invitation from Vale Hamanika, whose music rag Search and Destroy and consequently his bound collections of bizarre literary profiles, Re/Search, was able to finagle a visitation from the bard of paranoid beat to San Francisco.

I was blessed twice with the chance to spend time with Mr. B, first at a party full of overexcited young monkeys who were flinging a large wine-bottle back and forth over the old gentleman's head as he sat patiently while I sketched him.

He was small-boned, dressed in English tweeds with a flat cap, and he was delightful company. We talked of nothing of consequence. He was generous with his time and a very well-mannered and soft-spoken companion, obviously very used to young people showing off and making a racket to impress him. He seemed not to notice their antics at all.

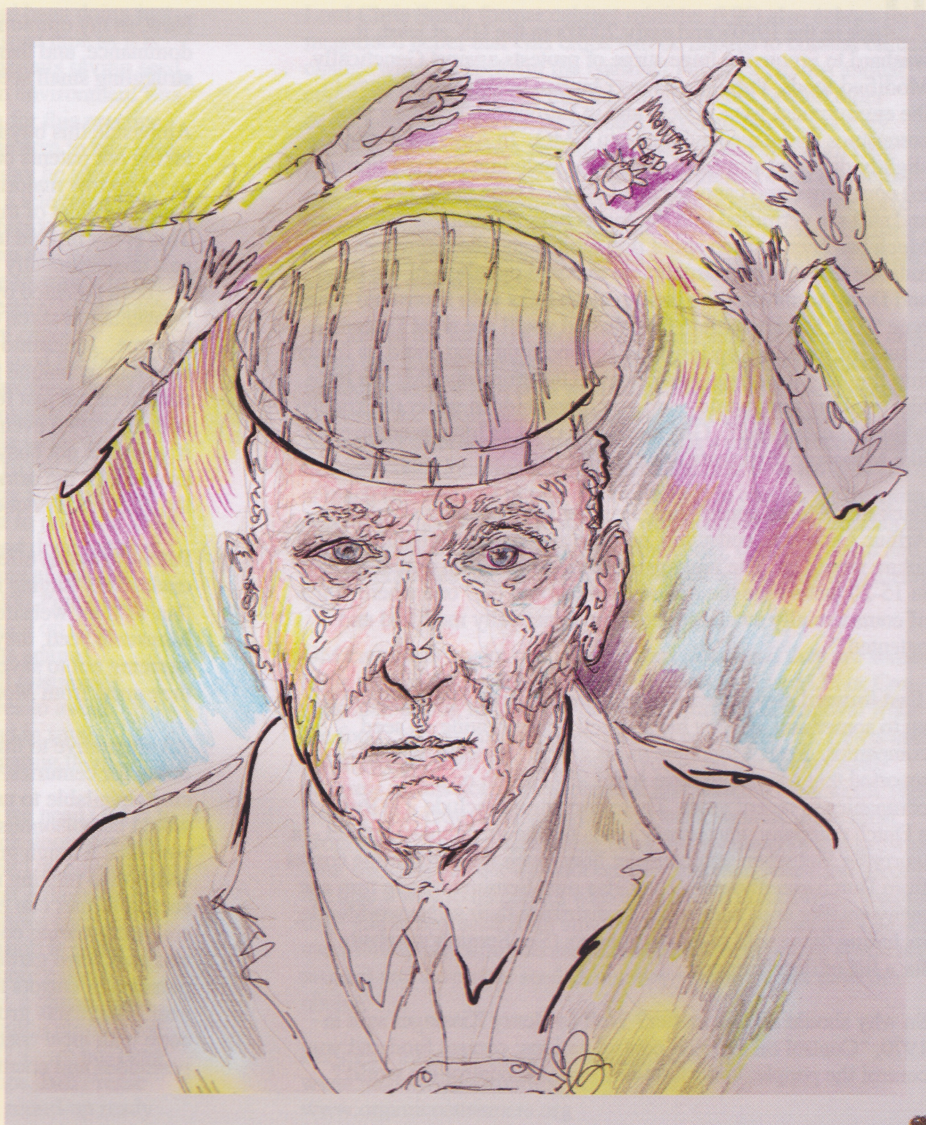
Earlier that year I had attended a party across the bay in Oakland, at the house of one Monty Cazzaza. He and Anna Banana were the bay area's sickly response to the New York hip scene.

They dressed in white, took cameras with them everywhere and were constantly making mountains out of molehills and holding pointless 'events' which they then publicized as cultural happenings – minus the talent.

This evening they were celebrating the eventual touchdown of a piece of space-junk which was due to hit somewhere in the U.S. They'd dug a barbecue pit cum junk grave in their garden, and I was told that Cazzaza had had a long running correspondence with the delightful Mr. Burroughs, until one day he'd decided to pen the lines "Dear Bill, how did it feel to shoot your wife?" The reply from Bill was eagerly anticipated. It read "Don't ever communicate with me again."

William Burroughs died in Kansas, surrounded by the remaining two of his beloved cats. His last words, written in his notebook, were "Love – best painkiller what there is."

To be continued.



THE ECO CHAMBER

THE SEEDS OF CONTROL

BY DAVID HAMILTON



Back in the 1990's and early 2000's in the UK at least, it was hard to ignore the huge surge of protests against Genetically Modified foods. Public fears over human health and damage to the environment were upheld and in Europe all the major food companies said a resounding no to GMO. In America it was a slightly different story and GM foods including (but not limited to) corn, soya, and canola (called oil-seed rape in the UK) were and still are permitted into the food-chain without any labelling. Much has been written about this subject and the references indicate that this was largely due to board members of the Food and Drug Administration having close links with Monsanto – Just type 'FDA Monsanto' into Google and you'll see what I mean. Now GM foods are no longer in the spotlight, you could be fooled into thinking they have gone away. Unfortunately, this is a little like thinking that mouldy cup you found hidden under the kitchen table will clean itself. GM foods will exist as long as companies like Monsanto, Syngenta and BASF exist.

Back in 1999 the consultancy firm behind the Enron scandal, Arthur Anderson, consulted Monsanto and asked what their ideal future would be. The reply came from a Monsanto executive that, in 15-20 years time their ideal future would be, "one where 100% of commercially available seeds are genetically modified and patented."

Fast forward eleven years later, it would seem Monsanto are up to something, as they have quietly been buying up seed companies. Peter Montague in his article 'The Bad Seed', reported that Monsanto have spent \$30 Billion on seed companies in recent years. These companies include De Ruiter, a Dutch company who supply seeds for the greenhouse market – a worrying fact when you consider how much food in Europe comes from Dutch greenhouses. They also own Seminis who in turn use many smaller seed companies to distribute their seeds worldwide, including those sold to home-growers (See Seminis's website for a list of distributors).

So why should all this matter? Well as Henry Kissinger said in 1970, "Control oil and you control nations; control food and you control the people; control money and you control the world."

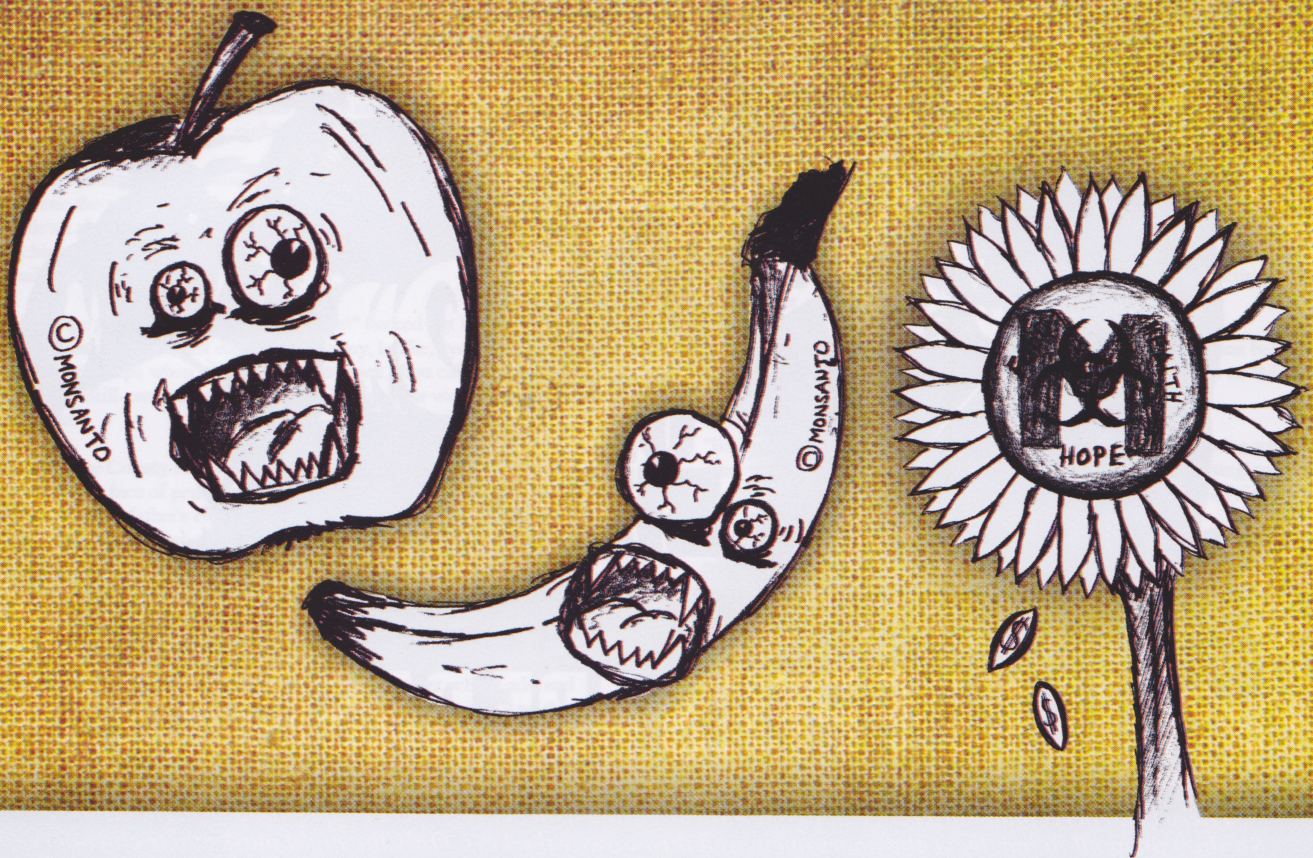
Now, in my opinion, in the midst of a global recession their dominance, and therefore control, can only get stronger as struggling small seed companies fall to these global giants.

Alongside this buying of seed companies, they have also been taking out patents on seeds. The law allowing them to do this got in by narrow majority of only one vote, but the global giant have made the most of this law and taken out over 11 thousand patents. This is not limited to just GM seeds but also breeding techniques so a conventionally bred soya bean which has a better oil content has been patented by Monsanto, and another biotech company Syngenta has taken out patent on a large part of the common rice genome. Monsanto are now trying to win a court battle to patent a breeding technique for pigs. If they win they could eventually gain control of not just food plants but the entire food chain. Perhaps one day they'll even want to own the copyright on household pets – if your dog got busy with the neighbour's Alsatian you could be arrested for the same copyright infringement as if you downloaded the latest Hollywood blockbuster.

Patenting seeds effectively locks a farmer into an agreement to exclusively buying Monsanto seeds. They are quite open about this, as their website confirms; "The first time growers purchase Monsanto seed, they sign a stewardship agreement and contract agreeing not to save and replant seeds produced from the crops they grow from Monsanto seed."

An alternative to this is saving seed, which farmers have been doing for centuries. This is why we have such a wide variety of crops available to us now. If it wasn't for this practice potatoes would be poisonous, carrots pencil thin and purple and wheat would be a tough grass seed almost impossible to harvest. In addition to making new varieties, by selecting only the strongest seed, a farmer can ensure a crop is suited to the particular climate, soil and growing conditions in their own area. Allotment holders and back-yard gardeners do this too. They allow their largest parsnips or carrots to go to seed to get a larger yield the following year. The plants grown from these saved seeds become adapted to cope with local pests and diseases and therefore less dependant on pesticides and chemical fertilizers.





One such farmer in Canada, Percy Schmeiser had been doing just that all his working life. He grew canola (or oil seed rape as it is known in the UK) and by saving seed (and his parents saving seed before him) a plant perfect for the Saskatchewan environment was slowly selected. He was well known in the area for this practice and farmers would come to him from all over the area to buy seed, adding to his income and reputation. Then one day he sprayed some canola plants growing like a weed around a telegraph pole with round-up, a well known weed killer or herbicide marketed by Monsanto. He'd been doing this year after year and when the plants didn't die, he assumed they had built up a tolerance to the herbicide. It later turned out he was trying to destroy Monsanto's patented 'round-up ready' canola, a herb-resistant canola. Monsanto found out about this and successfully sued the farmer for copyright infringement as he was 'illegally' growing the plant on his site. As this plant contained patented Monsanto genes there was a chance it had interbred with Percy's Canola so he was ordered to destroy 1000lb (454 Kilos) of seed. To put this into perspective you need 6lb of seed to plant one acre so Percy had enough seed to cover 167 acres or the equivalent to just over 2588 tennis courts. This meant, although the farmer had done nothing wrong, his livelihood and family heritage were put at risk for nothing more than finding a stray weed on his plot! Percy was not alone; the Institute of Science in Society stated on their website: "To-date, Monsanto has filed 90 lawsuits against American farmers; and 147 farmers and 39 small businesses or farm companies have had to fight for their lives to avoid paying additional court costs, attorneys' fees, and in some cases, costs incurred by Monsanto while investigating them."

One of the reasons Bio-Technology firms claim we need GM is to feed a growing population. This could be the back door how GM crops find their way into the UK and Europe. The UK government run Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs chief scientific advisor stated we'd have to explore options such as GM as "Over the next 20 to 50 years, the population is going to increase from 6.5 to 9 billion. There will be more extreme weather, more demand for food, meat, and water, a changing climate." So in order to meet the needs of a changing climate we have to rely on crops which are not adapted to it? There has been no real proof that yields any higher with GM crops, Bill Freese from the US Centre for food safety claimed that round-up ready soya beans had yields 5-10% lower than their conventionally grown counterparts.

Lord Chris Smith former cabinet minister (UK) also echoes this misguided belief that GM crops will be needed to combat climate change when he spoke at the National Farmer's Unions annual conference. He believes that the UK could fall behind other developed countries unless we take on board this technology. There is a little known fact that if cows are fed GM corn they will reject it in favour of conventional corn and even rats reject GM 'FlavrSavr' (trademark) tomatoes (incidentally, once force fed the tomatoes 7/40 of the rats died within 2 weeks). Perhaps a wise man would question a technology which produces a food even a rat would reject?

The key to the future of food in my opinion is not inventing new crops but finding old crops adapted to our new environment. Taro, for example, is a root crop with edible leaves and stems which grows in the warm, wet environment of the South Pacific. If our warm, wet summers continue, then this is a crop perfectly adapted to these conditions and has the yield of a field of asparagus (stem), spinach (leaves) and potato (root or tuber) in one go. If the rains disappear, there are plants already well adapted to dry conditions, such as quinoa (a grain a bit like couscous), corn and chard and simple practices like mulching that can go a long way to preserve water.

GM crops only make rich corporations richer and they are something we can do something about. A letter to your M.P. or Congressman urging their continuing ban (Europe) or removal from the food chain (outside Europe) would be a start. C.S. Lewis once said: "We all want progress, but if you're on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive." So perhaps going back to a bygone era and growing your own is a perfect way not only to increase your food security but also a way to be certain where your food comes from. I would urge you to buy seed from small independent companies who don't use Monsanto/Seminis as suppliers (email them or call if you are unsure) and save your seed as one day you might not have this choice.

For more information visit www.gmwatch.org
www.responsibletechnology.org
www.organicconsumers.org

Illustrations by Ellie Mains





'There is no perceptual difference in psycho-linear parallelism between bent coppers and straight crooks. So sling them all in jail, leave the doors open, and throw away the keys. Only the night masks their chicanery and the uniform their smugness. The real villains are defined by affluent suburbia, high professional standing, and membership of a secret society.'

Oswald Brill, half-brother of honest-as-the-day, bent copper, Billy Brill.

On a frozen blanket on the stubborn ground behind a naughty Nissan hut at RAF Ashford, on a creepy-crawly Glen Miller evening sometime in forward-back-side-together February 1945, a swift and certain spermatozoa named Tail-End Charlie chassed and glided over the points at Tuxedo Junction, choo-choo'd all the way along the causeway to Chattanooga, and collided head-on with the Seven-O-Five just leaving Pennsylvania 6-500... Ohhhhh!

"This little foetus'll become a great clicker at True Form one day," hoped true-blue Auntie Ethel and Uncle Stan, for whom diligent servility to the ruling class was what made Britain great, and bowls in Abington Park a haughty pastime for tea-and-biscuit Marxists.

"We'll thrash the cocky little sod into shape!" tongue-lashed Sgt Barraclough, in the name of The Crown, referring to the novice police cadet. "Him and his Z Cars' swagger, his pathetic US Bonds' double-track impressions, and his mother's twelve-inch clothes-brush bulging his virgin truncheon pocket for generous effect. And if I catch him in Lynn's Cafe again with his mate Ginger, I'll have his guts for garters! Gene Vincent, my arse!"

"I pity the poor policeman," opined the lamentable Inspector Judd at the Annual Police Review, a couple of weeks before being sent upstairs to a cosy little office job for being too nice.

"The dog's dinner is nice, and nothing else....!" Judd was reprimanded. "It's a cosy little office job upstairs for you, Roland."

And so it was that three months after a spasmodically dodgy birth, little Charlie Brill was whisked away from his doting dad, left stranded as a batman in wartime Aberdeen. After having toasted his little lad at Christmas, Bertie Brill had resumed his regimental posture in diligent servitude to some random colonel's boots and tiffin, only to return home in the spring to find his son and heir spirited away by his nervous mum, from Kettering to Northampton.

Collective de-mobbing seemed to be the order of the day. Apart from the kitchen sink, Bertie's family home in Linden Avenue had been emptied of everything (save the lounge carpet, which had been rolled up along with the underlay, and the cryptic notelet: "Gone.")

"Ah ha," said Sgt Barraclough, "a perfect candidate for a beat bobby: No father figure, hey?"

"Then I'll be his dad! He'll steal ping-pong balls from Woolworth's if I say Boo!"

"Better off in the rough stuff with me at Lotus," said Uncle Stan, jauntily preening his parade-ground quiff with his right hand, whilst jingling the loose change in his trouser pocket with his left. "I'll teach him the tricks of the shoe trade, and one day he'll get a nice little office job up in Stafford."



The Jowett Javelin glided along the A43 towards Northampton after a further clandestine heist in Charlie's home town to plunder another treasure from under Bertie Brill's nose – this time, Co-operative Labour Party Cycling-Canvasser Granny Brill, Bertie's mum. The shadowy gloom of a grim, showery March evening in 1948 gave ample cover for Charlie's posse to creep out of Kettering. On the back seat, between his conspiratorial mum and paternal gran, sat the three year-old police cadet-in-waiting, the source of an ideological war of attrition between the Radical Hard Left of his father's line; the Liberal Soft Centre of his Mars-a-day helps you work-rest-and-play mother; and the Royal Blue Stuff-Upper Right of his mum's aunts and uncles and their Spinney Hill hats.

"Brill's politics?" scoffed Sergeant Barraclough: "Sky blue pink, if you ask me! Great stuff! If you serve the Queen and the great unwashed of Bailiff Street, you should be a-political. As long as he's never been a-member of the Young Communists, he'll do for us. I don't want any fifth columnists, barrack-room lawyers, armchair bombardiers, soap-box orators, ban-the-bomb agitators, nigger lovers, reds-under-the-beds, suffragettes, or lah-de-dah Spinney Hill hats on my shift!"

To Charlie's right, his stiff and achy lost-property granny, humming "Velia, oh Velia..." and struggling to get comfortable; on his left, his thief-in-the-night mum, sitting bolt upright, wringing her hands and fiddling with the corner of her lace hankie, praying for some unknown reason that they wouldn't be spotted

"Yeah, his mother's a bag of nerves: She works at County Hall! We'll have no problem with young Charlie in uniform; absent dad; local government mum; bit of a whittle-bum; could be queer; politically-confused; moonlight-flitter; chip on his shoulder. Pretty good credentials, if you ask me." Trouble was, no-one was asking him – Sgt Barraclough, that is.

There were no other sounds but the purring of the engine, the wiper blades squeaking, and the rain bucketing down. No chatting, just random gazing at shadowy outlines of trees tottering past them in the howling storm. The clanking of evening tank engines shunting at Cransley furnaces; the dim sighting of Odmidod, the Broughton scarecrow, standing sentry at the village water tower, ghostlike in the quivering headlights; the howling gale at Gibwood Comer; a brief stop opposite the Old Red House so that Uncle Stan could adjust the wind-screen wiper-blades, giving Auntie Ethel a last chance to unravel the screwed up newspaper and pass around the last few print-stained chips and batter bits before they completely froze. Bit spooky for the young chap, all this moonlight activity; good training for a twilight career as a nocturnal peacekeeper.

Charlie got anxious when he couldn't catch his mother's eye whilst she was fumbling a greasy chip. He asked her why she had started sobbing, and she answered pathetically that she had something in her eye.

She put her right hand gently on her son's left thigh and vainly tried to sing him to sleep: "Golden slumbers kiss your eyes, smiles awake you when you rise; hush little darling don't you cry, and I will sing a lullaby..."

"Poofter!" muttered Sgt Blenny, after Brills' police cadet interview. "Mummy's boy; scared stiff of the dark: Classic night-shift qualities - we'll groom him!"

As they entered Northampton, passing Mansfield Hospital on the left (where in a few years' time the adolescent Charlie was to disengage his first bra-strap on a log by Claude's Lake) and seeing the approaching spire of St Matthew's Church, the greasy-chinned travellers perked up: "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile..."

"And you can wipe that stupid smile off your face!" barked Sgt Blenny, as Cadet Brill stood to attention on his first day. "It isn't funny, laddie, cycling to work with luminous cycle clips when standard issue is black, thou callow youth! Pull yourself together, Brill-cream, and nip into Jenkins' on your way home and get some black ones!"

At Stimpson Avenue County Primary School, the young miscreant had been a nervous wreck in the face of pedagogical tyranny. His mother had changed his name from Charlie (his father's choice) and replaced it with William (from his mother's line). William had become Billy, and Billy became the butt of the teachers' jokes:

On having to hand over his Tiger Tim badge, because it was an unnecessary accoutrement, the headmistress stood him out and taunted him: "Billy the Kid, King of the Kids, William the Conqueror, all of you sitting there looking so vacant... lest any of you think it is appropriate (what?) to enter school adorned (what?) with such junk, then you are advised (what?) to think twice! And that goes for your grubby little marbles, cigarette cards, catapults, cats cradles, bracelets, pen knives, chewing gum, love hearts, gob stoppers, string, kali, shoe-laces, conkers, caterpillars, chalk, rubber bands, sweet cigarettes, sherbert dabs and aniseed balls.... doesn't it Silly Billy?"

"I d-don't like sh-sherbert, m-miss," was all the young criminal could vainly stutter in self-defence, as he wondered whether he would be locked in the attic (Enid Blyton), shot at dry gulch (Billy the Kid) or burnt at the stake (Joan of Arc).

"Wipe that gormless smile off your silly-baby-wet face, precocious (what?) child!" The king of the kids had been mightily crowned, tongue-lashed, and the victim of righteous theft; that was the last he saw of his precious badge, a comic-voucher gift from his mum: Confiscated (what?)! But if his mum said it was right, why should school say it was wrong?

On sniffing rather than blowing, because it was less messy to swallow phlegm and boogies than snort them out all over his lips and chin, it was "Silly Billy! Don't you know how to use a handkerchief, you nasty little boy?"

"Yes, miss," the victim lied.

"Then come out to the front, Billy the Kid, and demonstrate."

"This is how Silly Billy blows his nose, boys and girls. (Pay Attention At The Back!) First he takes his handkerchief from his pocket, opens it, wraps it round his nostrils, pinches the hanky, and BLOWS! No, don't sniff, you blithering idiot... BLOW! Can you see, children, this silly boy hasn't a clue. We say Nincompoop, boys and girls... what do we say?"

"Nincompoop, miss."

Silly Billy, Billy Boy, Billy the Kid, couldn't blow - it was too painful; in floods of tears he resumed his seat, snot-ridden and heavy-laden... six months later to have a sinus operation at the General Hospital to remove the blockage and open up the nasal passage. He'd had no choice but to sniff up the snot and swallow it, because blowing blasted his brains out, made his eyes water, and popped his ear-drums. So some teachers were not only cynical (what?) thieves, they were vindictive (what?) bullies, too! But what had he done wrong?

On vomiting in the cloakroom later in the junior school, he was dragged by his ear into the classroom and stood out at the front by the acting deputy headmaster, cringing.

"Boys and girls, put down your pencils, and listen. Billy Brill has been found vomiting in the cloakroom. so from now on he shall be known as 'Bilious' Brill. What shall he be known as?"

"Bilious Brill, sir!" they tittered and chorused, not really knowing what he had done wrong. Did any child really know what the words 'vomiting' and 'bilious' meant? Were they aware that this Bilious Kid had actually been sick?

"Brill, you make me sick!" screamed Sgt Barraclough, as Cadet Brill was put on his first discipline charge, for devising an initiation rite for new cadets, namely inserting them head-first into the air-conditioning system behind the Magistrates' Court, so that they had to wriggle out backwards fairly quickly before they ran out of oxygen, presumably later to suffocate and die. "You idiot, Brill... Big Bad Brill from Hopping Hill - never worked and never will! How could anyone have been so stupid?"

Back at Grammar School, down by the bike sheds where he would spit into the headmaster's tea before taking it to him at his pride-and-joy swimming pool, it was 'Bastard Brill' from some sixth-formers who knew that he hadn't got a dad; 'Beeg Beel' from the Assistante Francaise; 'Brillo Pad' when he had a crew-cut; 'Bashful Brill' when he blushed on getting an early afternoon erection from touching up the Barry Road schoolgirls in the Victoria Café at lunchtimes; and Beetroot Bill when he had to administrate genital relief into his hankie at the back of the class, before settling down to switching off in Maths. No wonder his mum made sure he never went out without a hankie: Tears, blood, sweat, snot, semen; every orifice well-represented; the lower down the body, the smellier!

Billy Brill wasn't as thick as some people had labelled him; he was actually pretty smart, though something of a wastrel. He preferred to spend his dinner money up Victoria Cafe, feeding the juke-box ('Teen Beat', 'Rave On', 'She She Little Sheila', 'C'mon Everybody', 'Quarter to Three') and sipping Coke (Pepsi was too sweet); his bus money on records from down John Lever's (US Bonds; Gene Vincent; Buddy Holly; Sandy Nelson; Eddie Cochran); his paper-round money (and from flogging stuff he nicked from the newsagent's) on going up The Cobblers, train-spotting down Vicky Park, the putting-green up the Race-course, Saturday evenings down the Gaumont, and Sunday evenings up the Plaza.

He was a pretty good rugger player at school, a failed trialist down Franklin Gardens, and at soccer, a pretty good right back for Owen Athletic (S.G. Owen & Co). At cross-country running he was County standard, but in class he was a dunce: "He would if he could but he can't understand it; Rule 10, Page 3; words fail me; the lunatic fringe; shows not the slightest interest; not satisfactory; N/S; N/S - interminably N/S."

Fodder for the Police Force - they must have seen him coming a mile away: Broken home; only child; childhood evacuee; doting mum; bottom of the class; compulsive wanker; fit and sporty; bullied by his school-teachers; low self-esteem; inferiority complex; obsessed with Z Cars; politically confused; small time newsagent-crook (fags, girlie mags, chocolate bars, cap bombs, liquorice wood); closet Teddy boy; cow-horn handlebars; bit-of-a-yobbo: Perfect!



"A stroll along Bailiff Street and we'll make him into a racist; a night down the bunny run and we'll make him into a sexist; and if he gets those bloody clips sorted out, we'll make him into a cyclist! Stick an entry test in front of him, tell him the answers, and sign him up - he sounds a right prat!"

And so it came to pass that young Billy Brill, nurtured at school into a sub-human moron (i.e. devoid of any critical thinking, creative thought, or intrinsic motivation) swore his allegiance to God and The Queen, his Country, his Duty Sergeant, and the poor souls who inhabited Semilong, Jimmy's End and other dodgy parts of town, faithfully to love, honour and protect the flotsam and jetsam down Spring Boroughs, especially Little Cross Street; to crusade blindly over the tracks into Far Cotton; to faithfully black cycle-clip his way to the higher echelons of Kingsthorpe village; to perambulate in a north-easterly direction to Spinney Hill, where hats were all the rage; and to circulate amongst the Abington gentry, who strolled along Birdcage Walk on summer afternoons, nibbling raisins and gawping at the peacock. Northampton was the poor man's Dodge City, the only cemetery with electric light, the Cotton End level crossing creating a two-tier demography: the puffs (north) and the scruffs (south)!

"Issue forth and make yourself useful, you idle extract!" trilled Sergeant Barraclough to Police Constable Brill, once the useless specimen had survived the lunatic asylum known as No 4 Police District Training Centre, Ryton-on-Dunsmore. "Show 'em what you're made of, lad. Give it 110%. Northampton is your walnut whip - hard on the outside, soft on the inside, and makes you sick unless you chew it slowly."

"Yes, sarge; thank you, sarge."

So issue forth he did, only to find that 110% of nothing was nothing, and that nothing was a crock of gold should you be born in Brunswick Place with something less than anything.

"Well done, Brill... we'll give you 40%, which is a reasonable pass, considering the brilliance of your mock-evidence in the mock-court - the only trouble being (and we docked a few marks here whilst you were in the dock, get it, tee-hee) was that you arrested the wrong man. In the role-play, you thought that the police sergeant dressed up as the road-sweeper was in fact the thief who stole the shirts from the Chinese Laundry, when in fact, he wasn't; it was the police inspector who was dressed up as traffic warden who was the culprit, so you got a little confused there. But never mind, your evidence was BRILL-IANT, Brill... get it, tee-hee? It's just a shame that you arrested the wrong man. But hey, it's only role play - and the evidence you gave was outstanding. 110% for evidence, zilch for observation, and total crap for arresting procedure equals 40% overall. As long as you convinced the mock-judge, that's good enough for us at this stage."

Six months simulated-porridge for a perfectly innocent simulated-man; simulated-justice was judicially given out to a summarily-innocent simulated-bystander, but so what? He shouldn't have been hanging around the laundry in the first place! Same as at the Hotel End in the First Division; if they're stupid enough to stand there in the first place, reel them in, Brill; they should have stood on Spion Kop. Idiots!

A novice-rated PC Brill at Cobblers -v- Liverpool at the County Ground in 1966, eager to earn a bit of overtime and hopefully put into practice the arrest procedure he had perfected at training school (along with catching a glimpse of the game) was allocated duty at the Hotel End; he patrolled along the cinder track. He was ridiculed for being a pig (thanks, Richard Neville and all at 'Oz'), a bluebottle, the fuzz, Mr Plod, the filth, the ol' bill, a shit, a rozzar, scum, a rascal, a flatfoot, and a great fat dollop of lard!

At about a quarter to three (thanks, US Bonds) with the crowd swelling and the yobbos getting noisy, a group of Scousers came swarthyly into the Hotel End from the back, after becoming well-oiled after a couple of hours in the County Hotel.

PC Brill, Bastard Brill, Big-Bad-Brill, Bilious Brill, Silly Stupid Prat-Head Brill, Forward-Back-Side-Together Brill, King-of-the-Kids Brill, the Ol' Bill Brill, strolled back and forth, repartee-ing with the crowd, bantering, having fun, money-for-old-roping... when out-of-the blue, from the very back of the Hotel End, flew a small, orb-like, object resembling the most succulent tomato from Uncle Stan's far-right window-sill. Yes, a tomato!

"Thwack!" The missile hit him squarely on the lapel of his brand-new Gannex mac, his pride and joy, the built-in truncheon pocket now holstering a fully-fledged truncheon as he was a fully-fledged constable, 'fathered' by the truculent, belligerent, and completely incomprehensible Sgt Barraclough.

The missile exploded on impact, and PC Brill was splattered with juice, pips and skin before the remains of the item plopped onto the clinker-track, so that it became soiled and inedible.

Young PC Brill was undone. His mother loved him and would not want to see him made a fool of, so he glanced at the ground and contemplated picking up the squidgy mess and slinging the offensive item back into the crowd. Anyone who might get a face-full of the object would thoroughly deserve it, because they should not have been there in the first place; then they wouldn't have got tarred with the same brush (sic splattered with the same tomato).

(The same could be said for customers at the Mitre, the North-Western, Lynn's Cafe, the Maple Ballroom, the Cross Keys, St Mary's Hall and all Wimpy Bars, and the CND protestors on Wood Hill: If that's where they went, that's where they would be violated. Also the bunny run, wherever that was...!! And the Queen's Arms and the Cri: "Go out and make a name for yourself, young Brill... wind 'em up, lock 'em up, and fill your pocket book up!" And when the Irish came to Semilong, the Poles heaved a sigh of relief, and when the West Indians came, the Irish heaved a sigh of relief; and when the Asians came, the West Indians heaved a sigh of relief. Each group heaved a sigh of relief when another came and took the eye of police prejudice. Sergeant Barraclough said that they had no right to be here, that they stank the place out, and that they would be better off behind bars!)

"I am booking you because you have no road fund licence!"

"No, you are booking me because I am black!"

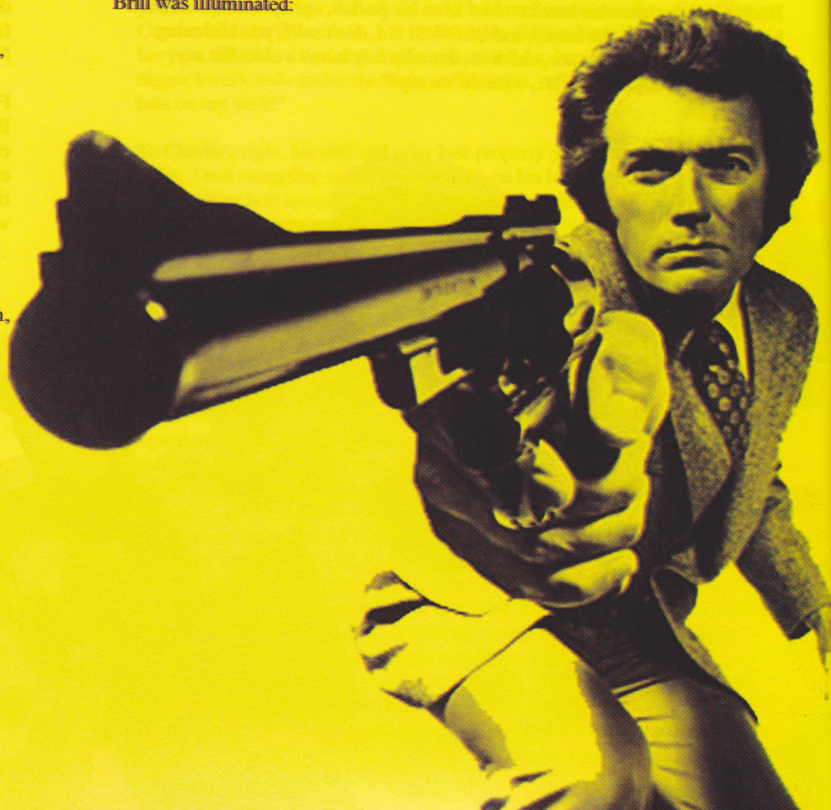
Then, as if by divine osmosis, a wide and throbbing channel appeared in the baying crowd, through which was hurled a young Liverpool fan who would surely be forensically tested for gross tomato misconduct, and who was constabulary-dragged from the back, to being flung into the concrete wall at the front: Normal procedure of the day - set a thug to beat up a thug! Soft tomato; hard wall!

The crowd went berserk, howling with derision as the malevolent youth was bundled over the wall and frogmarched out of the ground then, unbeknown to the tomato-splattered Brill, slung into the Black Maria in Abington Avenue. Young PC Billy Brill had been mortified to find tomato droppings smothering the front of his mac, a mess that would surely horrify his doting mother. The little that splashed onto his right toecap, he rubbed off onto the lower back of his left trouser leg - more trouble when he got home!

In Brill's rage, and also for a bit of a laugh, he went ahead and picked up the tomato remnant and hurled it silly-willy-nilly into the heart of the Hotel End, hopefully to plonk itself on some poor fan's head, and if really lucky, to blind him with a bit of the attached gravel. After all, his mind-set was that they were all as guilty as hell for standing there in the first place, so it didn't really matter who copped it.

"Don't you be messed about, young Brill; give as good as you get."

On Monday morning, William no-middle-name Brill was relaxing after earning his bit of overtime, along with having his messy revenge! At somewhere round-about two sets down and struggling nil - three in the third, Brill and his tennis partner on the Racecourse, were distracted by a wailing police car, rushing up Kettering Road towards the White Elephant. Something in Brill's sub-conscious made him feel uneasy - surely they weren't looking for him? He was discomfited, but he didn't know why. On Wednesday morning, Brill was illuminated:



"Where the hell were you on Monday morning, Brill?"

"Playing tennis, sir. I lost."

"Lost the plot, you mean! Why weren't you in court, you blithering idiot?"

"I was, sir. The tennis court."

"Don't get cocky with me, lad. The tomato villain. No bloody evidence!"

"What happened, sir?"

"The magistrate asked for evidence from you. Yes, you! Then he called for Exhibit A - the tomato, and Exhibit B - your mac. There was no bloody tomato and no bloody mac, and no bloody silly you. You're on a discipline charge. You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so, but anything you do say may be taken down in evidence and used when we throw the bloody book at you, you bloody lunatic!"

"Oh dear, sir. I'm sorry. I was playing tennis with my friend. I didn't know you had arrested the lad. I'm sorry there was no evidence. I threw Exhibit A back into the crowd, and mum didn't like the mess on Exhibit B so she cleaned it up straight away. And my trousers are still in the wash. She said she wasn't going to have me go out looking like that. So he got off the hook, then?"

"Off the hook? They found the little bugger guilty, fined him ten bob, and sent him back to Liverpool with a flea in his ear!"

"How did they manage that without any evidence, sir?"

"It's in the Chron! Read about it for yourself! You're on a charge!"

And so it was that young PC Brill, because no-one had told him of the arrest, no-one had told him that the miscreant had been charged, no-one had told him about court that Monday morning, ended up on a police charge - his name recorded in the rascals ledger, as a policeman who had been cautioned for gross dereliction of duty.

"Blimey," thought young Bill, "I'm on a charge because no-one told me what was happening. And the young lad got fined for something that couldn't be proved. So in Law, there's no difference between right and wrong. There but for the grace of God...!"

When he had been a cadet, Brill had been to The Mounts Baths for life-saving training.

The cadets didn't put their uniforms into lockers; they left them hanging up in the cubicles, of which six were employed to accommodate the modesty of each one. Mid-afternoon school kids did the same; trust, and patrolling school-teachers, assured that their belongings would be safe.

Not so. Upon changing back, one of the cadets was alarmed to find that his wrist-watch had been stolen from his uniform trousers' pocket. Enter the observant Big Bad Brill.

"Ah-ha," he thought, "I bet I know who it was," because just as the cadets had entered the pool, getting out of the water was his crooked-mate, Ginger, from Lynn's Café, who had been in for a lunchtime dip. It must have been him, he thought, so he shopped him, and Ginger got fined for larceny and flogging the watch at Lynn's, and Brill lost a good chum; the magistrate gave him a commendation for observation, and it made great news in the Chron. But the Inspector i/c Cadets charged Brill for exceeding his brief, for although he was wearing a police uniform he was not fully-fledged, and he should turn a blind eye! Turn a blind eye?

When the prostitutes Brill met in corner shops in Semilong offered him hand-relief in the taxi cab office at 2am for turning a blind eye on their shenanigans, he thought that that was a pretty good return for turning a blind eye to kerb crawlers and brothel creepers. The only trouble was that he struggled to explain to his mum the cheap perfume on his jacket shoulder, and why he would always rush to be first at the twin-tub to dunk his trousers, pants and hankies. "You always seem nervous when you come in from Semilong," his mum would observe.

After winning the affection of the niece of a top prostitute who could tell by his mum's clothes brush that he was pleased to see her, Brothel Brill turned a blind eye. He gained a sixth sense for the mingled smell of cheap perfume, gin-breath and stale semen. In no particular order, supplemented by a certain sore-in-the-saddle cowboy swagger, he was aware of how Northampton's flourishing sex trade was uniformly-reflected in a sensual pungency that permeated the police station mess room, night-patrol meetings in the portico at All Saints Church, tea-breaks in the Railway Tavern, and dawn leaks in Guildhall Police Box. When in Rome!!! Bastard Brill couldn't beat them, so he trembled with them. He turned a blind eye. Nor did it send him blind, so bang goes another myth! Unlike his mother's clothes-brush, Brill began to wonder whether he was straight or bent.

After he had been taught by an old-time bobby how to stroll by the counters in Woolworths, suddenly to whip off his right glove ahead of a pseudo-sneeze, drop it on the counter, whip out his hankie, pseudo-a-choo explosively, wipe his nose, pocket his hankie, then pick up his dropped glove, within which he had scooped up the sorry ping-pong ball, he turned a blind eye when he saw other rascally coppers doing the same. Items for High Street larceny included a packet of Maltesers, a pencil, a sups-ball, a key-ring, a tube of Smarties and a powder compact. (Same as paper-shop days.)

When coppers were such rascals, Brill knew that he had better turn a blind eye. Look what happened to his mate from Lynn's and the lad from Liverpool - one guilty of being born into poverty, the other guilty of having a laugh. Never again was he going to arrest anyone guilty of nothing more than not joining the police force as a means of validating their criminality. He felt guilty about shopping Ginger, and sorry for the Liverpoolian tomato lover, whilst his colleagues were nicking stuff from Woollies, hob-nobbing with prostitutes and victimising minority and counter-cultural groups. He pondered on the travesty of justice surrounding the simulated trial of the mock shirt-thief at Ryton, and it made him bilious.

Never again would that gullible little spermatozoa, chivvied and harried by sarcastic teachers, paranoid relatives and unscrupulous superiors, open his mouth and arrest any rogue for being nothing more than a victim of circumstances. Yet inadvertently, with his feet in his boots and his heart in his juke-box, he got sucked into the gaps of some of the most deviant wheelings and dealings in 1960's Northampton: the ethics of these, their danger, bigotry, lies, fraud and gross misconduct are incredible, hilarious and compassionate.

Yes, all coppers are rascals, whether they like it or not, and Young Brill's little tales are based on the truth of self-delusion.

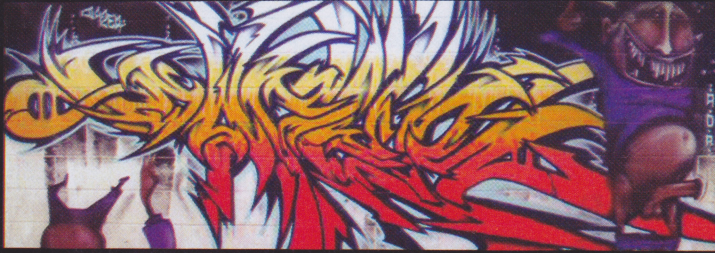
Enjoy, indulge, and panic!

The Ol' Bill November 2009

(With grateful thanks to Derrick A. Thompson, author of 'A Whole Scene Going - Northampton Town F.C. August 1965 - June 1966', within which comprehensive volume in Chapter 9, a commentary on the Cobblers - v- Liverpool 0 - 0 draw includes a contextual indictment of PC Brill's love affair with a tomato!)



"DAZER" "HE WHO DAREZ" WINE" "A.O.A."



GRAFFITI!

Whatever one's opinion on this topic, it's my intention to briefly track the historical, socio-economic and cultural value of graffiti. I aim to identify the skills and risks involved and touch upon the styles within this scene.

The roots of graffiti and its underlying socio-economic significance and historical value of archiving has long been forgotten. The skills involved are grossly underestimated and devalued. Graffiti has evolved but the roots of graffiti remain the same. Graffiti predates the hip-hop movement. The Greek word translated as Graphein means to "write". The earliest forms of graffiti date back to 30,000 BC.



In 1904, the first magazine to focus on toilet graffiti was launched, called 'Anthropophyteia'. Instances of graffiti on tracksides have been around since the 1940's in the UK and around the same time in the US. The phrase "Kilroy was here" was widely used as it was written and illustrated by US troops during WW2. In 1967 an Eric Clapton fan wrote "Clapton is God" in the Islington underground station.

Graffiti in the US and UK in 70's and 80's was intertwined with the hip-hop culture. Break dancing, rap and MCing are all elements of this scene. In 1972 Super Kool took graffiti to the next level and created: the fat cap. The fat cap was able to create a wider stream of paint for the writer to work with. Super Kool revolutionised the traditional cap by switching the normal thin cap that comes on a can with the wider, fatter cap that comes on a foam or spray starch can (Castleman 55).



Super Kool dropped the first piece in the 221st train yard. Following on, 'writers' such as Cool Earl and Topcat 126 were established. Dondi, Zephyr and Lady Pink came soon later.

The first graffiti artist to gain media attention in New York was TAKI 183, a youth from Washington Height Manhattan who worked as a foot messenger. Being a foot messenger, he was constantly on the subway and began to put up his tags along his travels.

The graffiti scene spread to countries across the world: South America, Europe and the UK. Graffiti has been commonplace in the last 30 years but continues to be overlooked or even dismissed as vandalism.

Graffiti styles have developed over the years. Letters and letterforms remain the key thing to master. To develop a hand style, to be prolific enough to gain exposure, to make your name travel are all fundamental elements of graffiti.

Graffiti styles vary dependent on skills, surfaces, time, height and space. To achieve a good throw up, dub, piece, blockbuster or hand style in a restricted amount of time, often publicly, are all factors to take into consideration. Graffiti artists spend decades mastering techniques and developing their individual styles. Commercialisation and money attempt to penetrate this historical method of social documentation. Certain types of 'graffiti' are becoming accepted. Small and large Co-operations are endorsing it and advertisers are feeding into the hype. Despite all the exposure, graffiti remains true to its roots.

"avoidin old age"



"AH YEH.....!"

How long have you been a writer?

20 years

What made you get into Graff?

Catching trains to school everyday, I saw it and thought I wanted to do it. I was rebellious and had just moved to a new country. I wanted to rebel against the system.

How did you start? By catching quick tags?

Yeh, I started off bombing on my own and then found a mate later on, a guy called Frenzy (RIP). We caught the train to school together and would batter the last carriage on the way home.

Can you name any other influential writers?

Yeh, Kode, Atome, Puzzle, Murder, Swet, Bates, Master of style Kase2. What Kase 2 was doing in the 70's-80's is what people are doing now, original styles with pure funk.

Why do writers target trains?

It's the buzz, the feeling you get when you hit one. It's all about getting up and I love seeing my work move. You get more of a rush this way and when your work travels around the country on something moving, then more people will see it.

How hard is it to hit transport?

It's never an easy thing. Sometimes you have to suss a spot out for hours or days. It depends what country you are in. In certain countries in Europe you can just walk onto tracks, no fences, no hassle. It's more difficult in the UK, they take Graff more seriously. Here you've got to think about barbed wire fences, razor fences, sensors, cameras, security guards and trackies. If you hit trains in the UK you'll get props because of the risk involved.

What are the risks involved?

If you get caught there are heavy penalties. You can have huge fines or jail terms. It's ridiculous! Painting steel is seen as a terrorist act. Personally I'd rather see a painted carriage than a plain dirty one. They never clean trains unless they are going to buff one. It's a joke.

Are there any other risks?

Yeh, you have to think about your safety. If you are hitting tracks you have to take care about the third rail. Hit that and you'll fry. The other risks are being hit by a train. You also have to remember that certain crews own yards, so you can't push it or you may suffer the consequences.

What is a crew?

A crew is a bunch of like-minded people, which understand each other and share the same mentality. You can have a laugh with crew members, but crews can be regimental. Everyone in the crew needs to be on the same wavelength. Graffiti is seen as antisocial, but that's not entirely the case as it brings writers together, but that cuts off when you paint.

Is graffiti mindless vandalism?

It can be. Most start out just wanting to smash up streets. But some writers move onto developing hand styles and flow. Taven is a good example of a writer with great hand styles. A good tag has many elements. It's all about what you can get done in a short amount of time. The more you can achieve and the cleaner it looks quick time, the better it is.

Do the public underestimate graff and devalue the roots of graffiti?

Yes! Graff style is down to the individual. It takes years to develop your own letter style. You start working from basic bubble letter, then eventually start adding straighter lines, add arrows and keep developing the style.

What do you think about female writers?

It's hard for girls to get into graff, as it is male dominated. I'm pleased we have female writers cropping up.

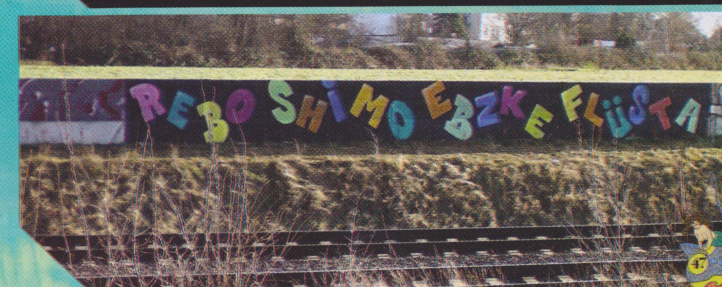
Should graffiti be kept to the streets?

Yes! graffiti is not street art. It should remain an underground thing, which is its history.

Is graffiti becoming commercialised?

Yes! It's becoming fashionable which is a joke. You can buy paint easy now. Back in the day you had to rack paint because you couldn't afford it and there were limited colours so you had to make your own up. Spray paint is suppose to be made by graffiti artists, but they are just getting ripped off now by big businesses. Big companies all want Graff designs for publicity, but give the wrong impression because it's illegal. I hate commercialism. These businesses, that are run by 'so called' 'graffiti' artists to help the fellow writer are ripping us off. The products were meant for graffiti artists and the real prices. They're out pricing what people can afford. Well, I don't want to see all those big adverts through out my city, I think they are ugly, but I have no choice so in the same fashion, I will spread my letters everywhere.

Thanks to the interviewer, big shout out to all my crews and special thanks Jen.



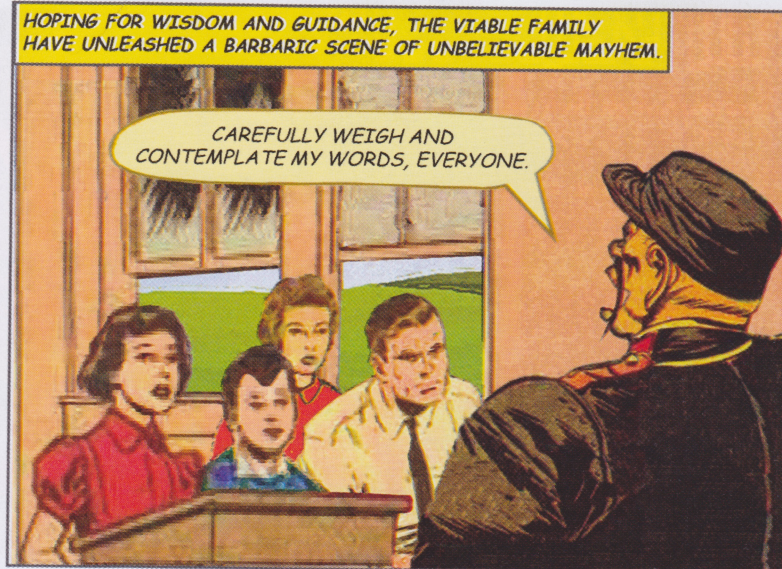
WHO CAN GIVE DUE CONSIDERATION TO THE NOTIONS AND PROPOSALS OF ...

JOHNNY VIABLE

PART 2

by STEVE AYLETT

HOPING FOR WISDOM AND GUIDANCE, THE VIABLE FAMILY HAVE UNLEASHED A BARBARIC SCENE OF UNBELIEVABLE MAYHEM.



CAREFULLY WEIGH AND CONTEMPLATE MY WORDS, EVERYONE.



"MY LIFE IS WRECKAGE FROM END TO END"

"MY FATHER HATED ME."

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE BUT YOU BETTER LEAVE BEFORE I JUST IMplode INTO A MUMBLING MASS OF EVIL SNAILS AND ... OH, JUST GO.



"ATTEMPTS TO CONFORM FAILED INSTANTLY."

HEY SARGE, THIS GUY WANTS TO JOIN UP.

HE LOOKS LIKE A JACKET POTATO.



I WILL KILL YOU FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE! YOU WILL FALL BEFORE ME LIKE THE CORN BEFORE THE THRESHER, AND BLOOD WILL FLOW FROM YOUR EYES LIKE THE TEARS OF THE DAMNED! EVERYTHING WILL BE DESTROYED WITHIN MINUTES AS I UNLEASH MY FURY!



THE BONES OF INCONVENIENCE WILL BE EXPOSED AS YOU FALL INTO DISREPAIR AND STARK PANIC!

DO NOT THINK YOU WILL ESCAPE MY WRATH!

EVEN NOW MY NERVES ARE FIRING IN READINESS TO SMASH AND BURN.



ELEVEN OF MY ARM MUSCLES ARE CONTRACTING AS I CONSIDER MY MANY ACTIONS AGAINST YOU - BEWARE!

EVEN YOUR SKELETONS WILL NOT REMAIN WHEN I HAVE COMPLETED MY FRENZY UPON YOU. ONLY A SINGLE WHISP OF SMOKE WILL TELL THE TALE OF A MAN DRIVEN TO DESPAIR BY THE DISREGARD OF THOSE APPOINTED TO LOOK AT HIM. FOR SHAME!



BOW DOWN ALL BEFORE MY BOUNDLESS CHARM!

HE'S FLIPPED HIS LID. GET RID OF HIM.

"FLIRTATION ALSO PROVED A WASTE OF MY EFFORTS."



"FINALLY I BID FAREWELL TO MY NEW FRIENDS."

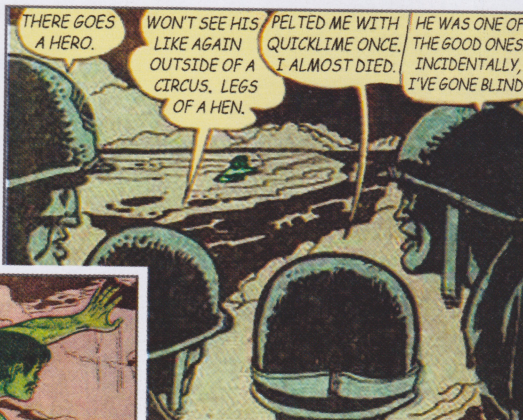


THERE GOES A HERO.

WON'T SEE HIS LIKE AGAIN OUTSIDE OF A CIRCUS. LEGS OF A HEN.

PELTED ME WITH QUICKTIME ONCE. I ALMOST DIED.

HE WAS ONE OF THE GOOD ONES. INCIDENTALLY, I'VE GONE BLIND.



"BUT I WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO FORGET."

EXTRA! EXTRA! BIG FELLA
HARBORS NO ILLUSIONS!
ATTACHES CONCRETE EARS
TO WHITEHOUSE!



I SEE YOUNG VIABLE HAS BURST HIS
CHANCES. RODE AROUND ON SOME SORT
OF DOG AND CAUSED DEVASTATION
IN THE TOWN. WHATEVER'S
NEXT FOR HIM, I WONDER.



IT WAS THEN THAT I KNEW, FINALLY, ALONG WHAT
LINES THIS WORLD IS ORDERED.

"A CHILD WEARING CLOGS
SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN
FIVE FEET TALL."



"ARCHITECTURE IS
DESIGNED FOR THOSE WHO
MOVE AT RIGHT-ANGLES."



"YOU ARE GLUED TO YOUR FUTURE."



"IN THE BALLOT BOX IS A
FAT WHITE CENTIPEDE
THAT GETS FATTER."



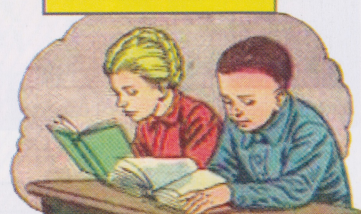
"DOVES FEEL WEIRD."



"THIS TOOTHLESS HAG IS
HALLUCINATING A SET OF
TIRED GOBLINS."



"SCHOOLS USE BOOKS
AS TRAMPOLINES."



"ROCKETS ARE MADE
MAINLY OF WOOL AND
RECONSTITUTED HAM."



"PUPPETS ARE EXPENSIVE."



"THIS GUY LOOKS CRAZY."



"I DON'T KNOW
WHAT THIS IS."



"SKIING IS FOR THE
LONELY AND DESPERATE."



"THERE IS
ALWAYS A
BEAR OUTSIDE."

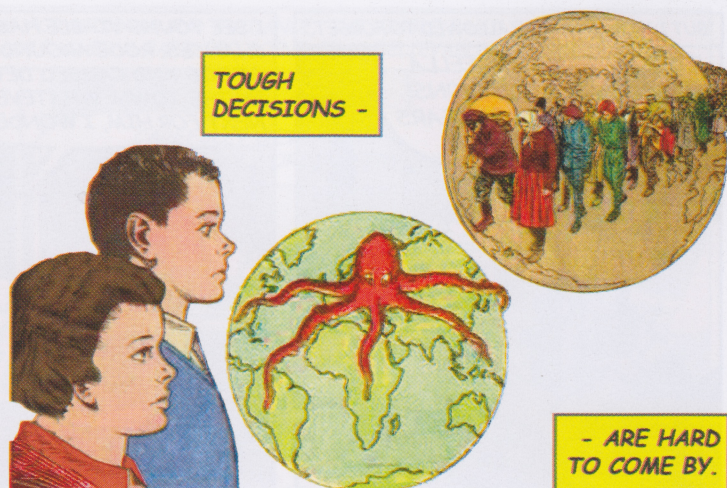
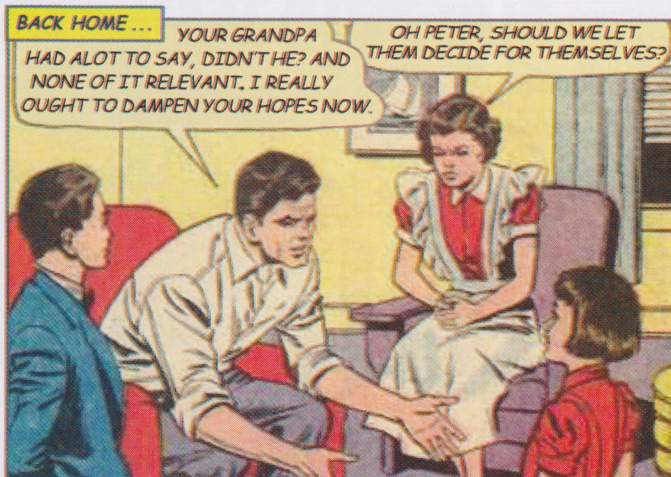


"IF A SNAKE LIKES
IT, GIVE IT A TRY."



THANK ME NOW EVERYONE, THANK ME, THANK MEEEEEEEEEE!





The Amazing FREE Iron on T-Shirt Transfer

Application Instructions

WARNING - Always ask an adult to help apply the transfer. Irons get very hot and should not be operated by children. This transfer should be applied by an adult onto cotton or poly-cotton garments only.

1. Set iron to cotton.
2. Garment must be clean and grease free. Prepare garment by ironing out creases and warming area where transfer will be applied.
3. Place transfer face down onto cotton garment still on backing paper.
4. Cover transfer with greaseproof paper before ironing.
5. Press the iron firmly down onto the transfer for 30-40 seconds, moving the iron backwards and forwards. Do not use steam.
6. Let transfer cool completely, and then peel backing paper off carefully.
7. If any print remains on backing paper, replace backing paper and repeat process.

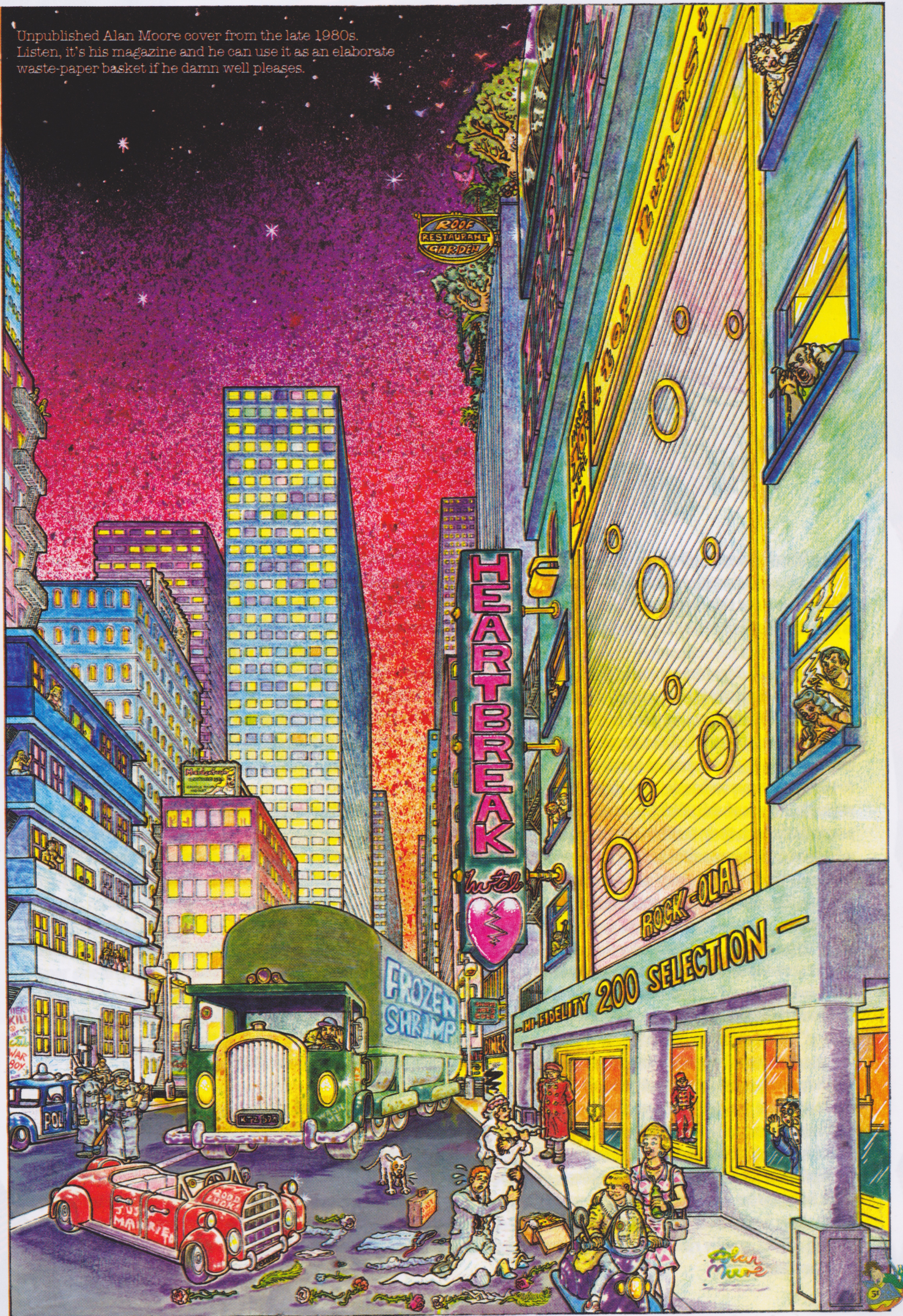


AFTERCARE : Wash no warmer than 40 c with normal detergent avoid detergents with high bleach content.

DO NOT TUMBLE DRY. Iron on reverse with cool iron. Never place a hot iron directly in contact with your T-shirt transfer once applied.



Unpublished Alan Moore cover from the late 1980s.
Listen, it's his magazine and he can use it as an elaborate
waste-paper basket if he damn well pleases.





WHATS HER PROBLEM?

'To Be Perfectly Honest ...'

by Mary Keeling

I live a life of straight talking no nonsense. If I've thought it and 'it' needs to be said, guaranteed I'm saying it. To some this may sound bolshie but is it really? Is it really that bad to just say what you think?

The way I see it, directness cuts out the bullshit and saves people ever thinking that they didn't know where they stood. What upsets me most is that other people don't adopt this approach. Some people prefer to say what is polite or consensual, so people like them or listen to them or to save on hassle; even if what they are saying is a crock of shit. Well I'm sick of listening to people lie through their teeth to the unsuspecting friend who leaves the house caked in fake bake, awkwardly limping in those darling shoes you have encouraged her to wear. 'Oh yeah that looks great, real classy' What the fuck?

Whilst growing up most of us were taught to be polite and mind our p's and q's and sometimes you might have said something like "hey granddad your wig is on wonky!" to get a slap on the wrist from your mum because that wasn't a polite thing to say. Okay I can see the point, poor old granddad probably did feel like a dick when he realised that we all knew it wasn't his real hair because half the time it was hanging off one side of his head, so by not telling him in the short term we didn't hurt his feelings. Long term though, don't you think he would have wanted to know, so when he went to the shops he wasn't wondering why people were staring at him, or why random kids in the street would point and laugh?

Aside from these little anecdotes of the past, it's the monumental moments, the times in life that we chose to ignore (or not bring up) because we want to avoid what might turn into confrontation. Your friend really annoyed you when she said that she thought your boyfriend's an idiot and you could do better. But instead of telling her and asking why she thought this, you ignore her and when you do see her feel uncomfortable in the pub. Not saying how you really feel is just a short-term fix and really when you look at the bigger picture you aren't doing anyone any favours. If you don't say it, you run the risk of animosity building up and blurting it out when you've had too much to drink. For example 'why did you say that about my boyfriend? Who are you to talk, what with all the knob heads that you've dated? As you both stumble down the street crying and then wake up the next day feeling like a real idiot for having such a ridiculous outburst.

Miscommunication must be one of the biggest contributors to relationship break down. Relationships end because someone's not telling the truth, not being open, or saying stuff that is just a load of shit!

When you have something to say just say it don't mess around with passive aggressive communication, hinting about something, hoping someone will 'get' what you really mean. If you want something, ask for it. If you don't like something say so, otherwise you will end up with more of the same. I figured this one out a few years ago when every birthday and Christmas I got some sort of giraffe from a family member.



Okay so I said I like giraffes and yes they are my favourite animal, but that doesn't mean I need a whole plastic, soft toy, wooden statue zoo of the damn things. So I just said it to everyone in my family, "look thanks for being thoughtful and getting me something that you thought I'd like but really guys I don't need any more giraffes!" They were a little upset for a couple of seconds but then all laughed and they no longer buy me these things. Imagine if I hadn't said anything I still be herding them now.

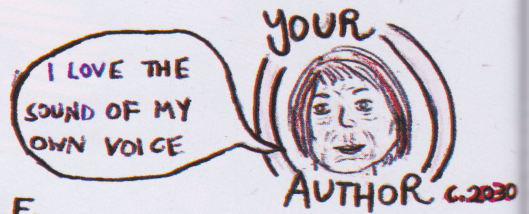
We 'dance' around the subject we most want to discuss, thinking that the other person will understand what we are trying to say or what we really want. But in fact the only thing you get from a conversation like that is frustration. God forbid you say what you really want, what you think or what you really want to do! For example: Have you ever laid in bed in the evening on your side arching your back and gently nudging your bottoms into your partners groin, hoping he will get this hint and give you a confirmation wriggle in return (Yes that old trick), rather than swing round and lay down our sexual yearnings? Okay so there is a constant worry that if you say what you really want, what if the other person doesn't like it or doesn't agree or judges me for opening up. Well if you really meant what you said then what the hell, if they don't like you because of it then were they really that a good friend in the first place? And if they are a good friend and you say what you want to do for a change then a compromise will most likely be arrived at!

As Dr Seuss said "Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind."

Now this is my approach to communicating and generally to life, I just think about the long term and also I personally cannot lie, and I really struggle not to say things that I think. Anyone who knows me knows this and when I'm met for the first you may find my attitude abrupt. But in the long run you realise that you have good relationships with people if you take this approach. There's no messing around, all things are open and discussed, if opinion is asked for it is given, if advice is sought true real advice is given. I know that I have an excellent group of friends who know if they want the truth to ask me and that is what they get. No messing around and wasting time and emotion on fickle relationships with people who don't have the strength for straight talking.

I'm an ambassador for directness (although my text may contradict this as admittedly I've been waffling.) But I was limited by choice. I could either walk you through shared frustrations or flog you with foul language, demanding those passives to fix up. I pray I have not upset the apple cart by my belligerent angst. I wish you all the very best and hope you take your dose of daily directness. One final fleeting thought, imagine, just imagine if our politicians caught on to the daily direct dosage diet. I would personally welcome frankness and transparency.

SOME ADVICE



AND CONSOLATION FOR MY 19 YEAR-OLD SELF,
WRITTEN IN THE HOPE THAT **DODGEM LOGIC** CREATES SOME KIND
OF TIME MACHINE, OR AT THE VERY LEAST SO THAT PEOPLE FROM SIMILAR
BACKGROUNDS MAY NOT SUFFER MY PITFALLS OR MISS OUT ON MY JOYS...

Signs that
your new
boyfriend
is a psychopath

① I WANT TO
*KNOW ALL OF
YOUR THOUGHTS
EVERY DAY

He says

② SOMEBODY ONCE TOLD ME
That when you're first seeing someone
they tell you quite explicitly what their
flaws are, but you're too caught up to hear them

HE SAID-

DON'T STAY
WITH ME, I'M
A C**T.

GOD HE'S SO
RISQUE, COOL
& CHARMING.

③

his room
stairs behind
a door -
(how fitting
is that?)

He lived with
his parents.
His mum was
so lovely to him

I bought you
some...
OK!

shall leave
them on
your
steps

Yes!

AND SHUT THE
DOOR

THEN

stupid
bitch

HE MIGHT
AS WELL
HAVE SAID

That's how I'll
treat you

RE: ISSUE 1:
like a grunge-era model.

EARLIER

IF I throw a
6, we'll
go to the
club

IF I throw a
one I'll talk to him

OK

I'm living
by the dice.
If I throw an odd
number, you
have to kiss
me

ME

I freed
my legs
from
his grasp

so you CAN SEE WHY IT LASTED SO LONG

I THOUGHT THIS WAS THE
COOLEST

CRACKLE

Silence.
Lying in bed
with him & just
hearing that and
smelling his B&H's

④

I need
to lose
weight

we're
getting
closer

I don't
want...

we're
getting
closer

ADVICE FURTHER:

GETTING UP IN THE MORNING
IS HARD FOR **EVERYONE**.
YOU DONT HAVE A
DISEASE.

it could be
M.E or LUPUS

* SEE ALSO =
STAY WITH YOU 24 HOURS A DAY
FOLLOW YOU INTO THE BATHROOM
* HE MAKES YOU THIS T-SHIRT.

MY BEAUTIFUL GAVE ME

MUM don't get
a credit
card and
don't go on
the pill!

TWO PIECES OF
ADVICE.

TIMES AND
PILLS
HAVE
CHANGED

room's was
a long time
ago. This
can't hurt

Why do I
want
to weep
all day
&
have
put on
2
stone?

THESE DIFFERENT
PILLS WILL
BE OK..

Why do I want
to die & have
put on 2 more
stone?

NO CREDIT CARDS
FOR ME, THEN



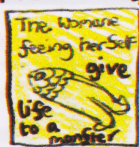
THEY AREN'T ALL GENIUSES. THEY'RE JUST POSH AND VERY CONFIDENT, OK?

GO TO THE RAD CAM

ORDER THESE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

SIXTEENTH CENTURY



CHAP BOOKS

Like *Take A Book*. Awesome true crime & 'I gave birth to a fyszhe' stories

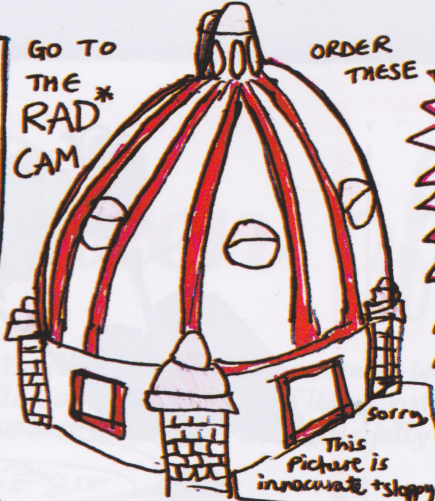


JOKE BOOKS

e.g. "Sir you may caule me a foolle but I speake lyke this that such mayge understante maye!"

THEY COME IN BOXES & NOBODY'S TOUCHED THEM FOR 50 YEARS!

RE: your Sylvia Plath essay
BLAKE MORRISON IS A MAN.



Sorry

This Picture is innocuate & sloppy

*so named because it's RAD

END IT
AFTER 3 WEEKS
NOT 3 YEARS

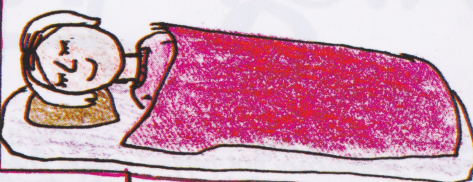
AND

getting kittens together is a mistake

IN MAY 2001 I GOT MY HEART BROKEN FOR THE FIRST TIME. MY CHILDHOOD SWEETHEART HAD DUMPED ME. I ACTUALLY THREW UP WHEN HE TOLD ME, I DIDN'T BELIEVE PEOPLE REALLY DID THAT.

The best part of each day was the first drink.

BEFORE YOU REMEMBER



MY NEXT 4 MONTHS =



BEER CRYING & COMFORT EATING.



I STARTED RUNNING AND POVERTY MEANT IATE LESS

IT WAS GOING OK. AND THEN ONE NIGHT I WENT OUT AND FOR A JOKE WE DECIDED TO LIVE BY THE DICE.

+ BUT I DID GET OVER IT - AND IT ONLY TOOK 5 YEARS!

YOU KNOW THE REST

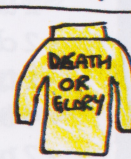
MY EXAM



Ramsgate Greyhound Racetrack

SHIRTS

MY STEPDAD GOT THEM OFF THE BACK OF A LORRY.

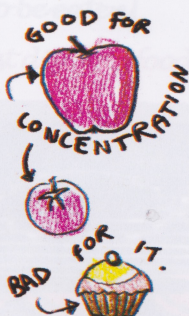


I WROTE THIS ON MY SHIRTS TO GET A LAUGH FROM THE MAN BEHIND ME. IT DIDN'T WORK.

DON'T TAKE BETA-BLOCKERS, EVEN ON DOCTOR'S ORDERS! YOU'LL FUCK UP YOUR FINALS & NEVER FORGIVE YOURSELF



SUB FUSC FOR EXAMS. (YOU DON'T WEAR THE HAT, BUT WHAT CAN THEY DO ABOUT THIS??) (I AM AN INFINITE REBELLIOUS BADASS)



DO YOUR UNIVERSITY WORK THE DAY IT IS SET.

That is very important advice indeed. J.I. Long xxx



Eat to the Beat

By Wendi Jarrett



W. I. Nettle Soup

This lovely spring soup makes the most of the feisty new season nettles with a twist... a dash of the popular Jamaican 'hot-pepper' sauce. The brave can add tiny strips of Jamaican scotch bonnet peppers... these are unbelievably hot but with a fruity flavour! Remember, it's best to use a little at first but you can always add more later! Another thing, both nettles and chilli peppers are pretty good for colds, arthritis and rheumatism. Nettles contain lots of Vitamin A, B and C, loads of iron and a surprisingly good amount of protein. When collecting the nettles it's best to wear thick rubber gloves and I use a pair of scissors too. Gently take hold of the tops of the nettles and snip them off. Pick the best new season's nettles that are just an inch or so high in March and early April. Nettles can be used in a variety of dishes that you might use for spinach or spring greens. They have a delicate flavour. They are not as pronounced as spinach, so great with poached eggs, in risotto or my favourite in the Greek dish, spanakopita with feta, eggs and nutmeg!

Ingredients For 4-6

- 2 dessert spoons of rapeseed oil
- 1 large onion - chopped
- 1 medium leek - washed and sliced
- 2 large potatoes - cubed
- 2 cloves of garlic - peeled
- 1 tsp fresh grated root ginger
- 4 big handfuls of nettle tops
- 2 pints of vegetable stock
(water & Bouillon stock cube)
- 2 tbsp Jamaican hot pepper sauce or ½
a fresh scotch bonnet pepper
- grind of sea salt
- nutmeg - grated

Method

1. In a pan with the rapeseed oil, place the onions, leek, ginger and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, stirring slowly.
2. Add chopped potatoes and nettles and cook for a few more minutes.
3. Add the stock and simmer for 20 minutes.
4. Add the nutmeg, hot pepper sauce and salt to taste.
5. Using a hand blender, whiz until smooth and serve with crème fraîche.

Queen of Puds

A delightful English pudding, that looks impressive and tastes wonderful. I've put a little Caribbean twist of lime instead of lemon rind in my recipe and use last season's crab-apple jelly for sweet but tart flavour.

Ingredients *Serves 4*

Preheat oven to gas mark 4, 180°C

- 1 pint semi-skimmed milk
- 4oz breadcrumbs (approx 6-8 slices of a loaf)
- ½ oz of butter / margarine
- 2oz sugar (1oz for meringue topping plus a tsp to finish)
- 1 lime - skin washed and grated
- 2 eggs - separated
- 3 level tablespoons of crab-apple jelly



Method

1. Butter an ovenproof deep dish (pie dish would do).
2. Pour the milk into a large microwave jug / or on the cooker top into a pan and heat to just boiling point.
3. Take the milk and add the butter, breadcrumbs, 1oz of sugar and the rind of the lime. Mix well and leave to cool (10 mins will do). The breadcrumbs will swell as they take on the milk.
4. Take the separated egg yolks and beat into the milk/breadcrumbs mixture and spoon evenly into the buttered ovenproof dish. Bake in the centre of the oven for 20 minutes. It should be just set.
5. In a small bowl heat the jelly / jam with a tsp of water to make it more spreadable. Spread over the baked breadcrumb mixture.
6. Whisk the egg whites to soft peaks and add a spoon of the remaining sugar and whisk again. Continue until all the sugar has been added and the meringue mix is glossy and stiff.
7. Swirl the meringue on top of the jam and sprinkle the final tsp of sugar lightly over the top. Place the oven and bake for 10 - 15 minutes. The Pud will be golden brown and glistening and just beg to be eaten!

For more info on tasty, low-cost dishes & foods email: wendi4news@hotmail.co.uk

DANCE DANCE DANCE DANCE DANCE

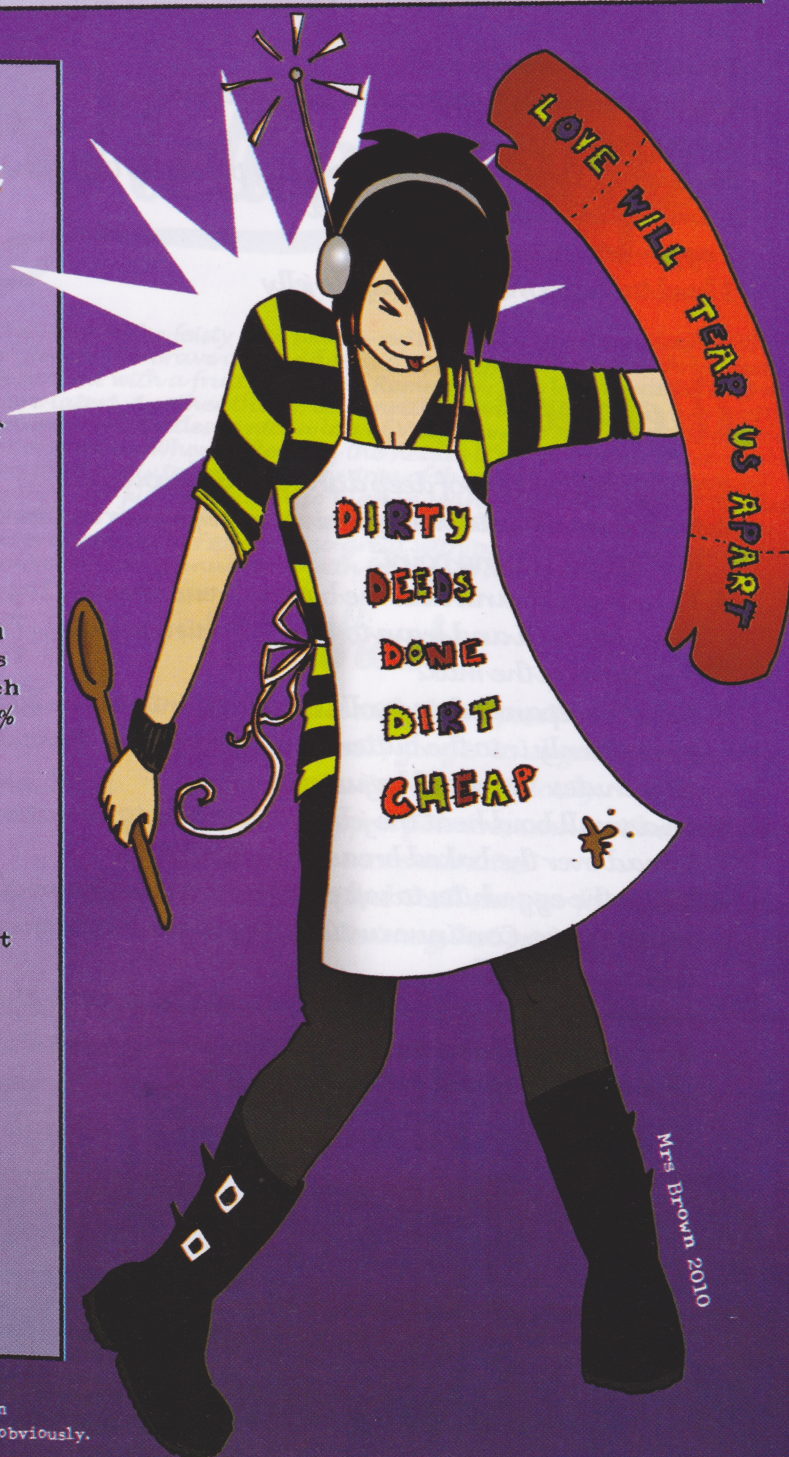
ROUND YOUR KITCHEN...

ENTER THE REALMS OF OBSESSIVE FANDOM BY MAKING OUR
CHARMINGLY LOW-RENT RANGE OF CULINARY ACCESSORIES

When routine bites hard and ambitions are low, there is nothing like a bit
of applique to brighten your day. Watch out though kids its addictive!

So For This Month's Craftilicious Project You Will Need...

- 1 Old, Sad-looking Cloth-based Items
From Your Kitchen
I am using one slightly greying tea-towel.
Flat colours work better if you want your
lettering to stand out, Patterns are fine if
you are feeling subversive.
- 2 Sharp Scissors
- 3 Needle & Thread
- 4 Some Brightly Coloured Bits of Cloth
(old bits of clothing, charity shop treasures
that don't fit but you like the fabric too much
to bin it etc.) It doesn't matter if its not 100%
cotton but it cannot be stretchy AT ALL.
Small prints work best, a mix of pattern,
stripes and spots is ideal.
- 5 An Iron & Ironing Board
- 6 Half a Metre of Bonda-web
Bonda-web is wonderful, alchemical stuff that
will hold everything together till its all
stitched down. You can get it online if your
town is not blessed with a 'Marion & Her
Market-stall of Haberdashery Wonder'...
as Northampton thankfully is.
- 7 Two Bits of A4 Paper
- 8 A Fat Marker Pen
- 9 Tunes (for inspiration)



Mrs Brown 2010

with acknowledgements to
Pete from Bang Bang Records for the ACDC Apron
& Half Man Half Biscuit for Joy Division Oven Gloves - obviously.



How to do it

This is the Tom Waits Tea Towel but the principals are the same for the other items...



Prepare your fabric by washing and ironing your tea-towel and all the decorative cloth pieces you are going to use. Don't skip this bit, I know its tempting...

NO DONT!

We'll don't come crying to me when it all falls apart...

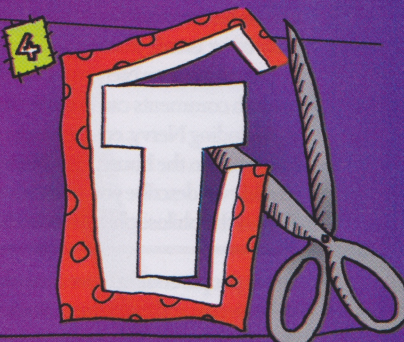


Choose your lyrics and draw out your design with a fat pen on a piece of paper which is slightly smaller than your tea-towel (about the size of two sheets of A4). Then flip this over and retrace the design on the back of the paper, next trace the reversed text onto the papery side of your bonda-web.

5 Cut roughly around the letters and iron them, sticky (shiny) side down, onto the **WRONG** side of your fabric. Leave a bit of fabric round the edge of the patch so you don't fuse your fabric to your ironing board.



Next cut out each letter and peel off the backing fabric, do one letter from start to finish to make sure you have got it the right way around before fusing and cutting the lot.



Lay out your tea-towel and arrange your lettering (this is when the original design comes in handy) then one at a time peel off the backing paper and iron them into place just Press down and hold the iron still, if you waggle it about you will bugger it up.

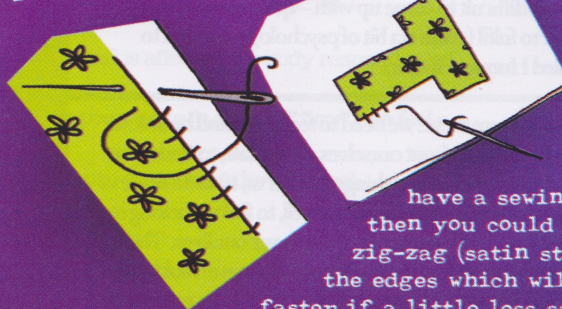


If you are blessed with a short attention span you could leave it there. However if you actually intend to use your tea-towel for dish drying etc, then you will want to do something about those edges, for they will go tufty and fall off before you know it. Such is life.

This is the bit to do sitting in front of the TV. It's like fishing, it's not supposed to be quick, you might even enjoy it. You need a double thickness of thread in your needle in an appealing colour as the stitches are going to show.

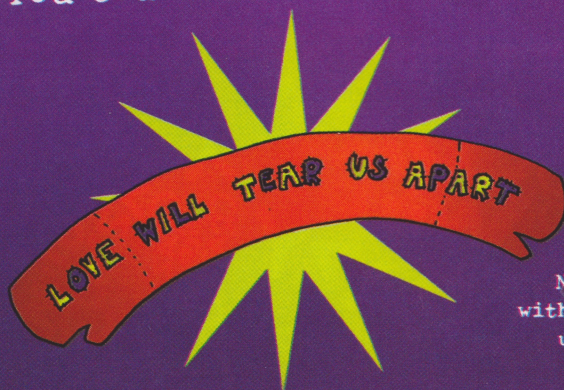


This is the stitch to use



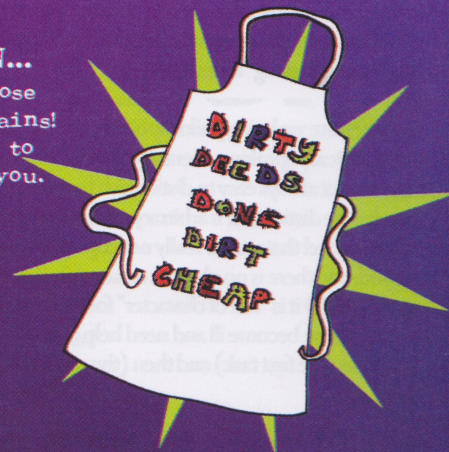
Or if you have a sewing machine then you could do a close zig-zag (satin stitch) over the edges which will be much faster if a little less satisfying.

You could also have a crack at...



ACDC APRON...
Cover up all those incriminating stains!
For those about to cook...we salute you.

JOY DIVISION OVEN GLOVES...
No kitchen is complete without a pair. Make sure to use non-melty fabrics (ie cotton only!)



THE SPINNING DOCTORS

ARE YOU CRAZY OR WHAT?

Nervy has been enjoying getting your emails but... Hey folks, most of them are a bit weird. Guess you are testing me out, but I think those that correspond are more philosophically challenged or challenging than they are medically in need! But am I surprised? No. The Snipper, however is less sympathetic and he has been known to ask why Nervy wastes his time answering emails from a load of nutters. But you should not be put off because Nervy isn't - and The Snipper's more down to earth comments can in fact be helpful, in bringing some of us, including Nervy, er... down to earth. Which is why he keeps him in the house. But Nervy kind of likes (not that he would ever describe you in such a way) nutters. So let's discuss the philosophical-medical interface:

Some people couldn't give a monkey's for the meaning of life, the universe and everything. Some are satisfied that it is 42 or, that God made it. Some suspect that the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy might be irony, but laugh and don't mind. Others mind dreadfully and feel cheated. Some consume large amounts of cannabis and other drugs and do discover the answer but forget it by the next morning - but not always (it's always a good idea to write your thoughts and dreams down as soon as you have them). And some use the drugs to try to blot out the whole damn thing including all their personal angst.

Nervy suspects that this is the nub of it - it is not really the universe we mind so deeply about but our own lives - and if we can make sense of them in some way AND also fulfil a few other basic needs - then we can be happy. There are some essential things about being human that are difficult to escape from, some common needs and facts about ourselves - and they are not difficult to come up with - quite obvious really - but harder to fulfil (there is a bit of psychology devoted to them called Human Givens).

The main ones are these: we need to feel loved and be able to give love, to feel OK about ourselves, to feel safe, to find some meaning in and understand things around us, to feel a sense of purpose, to be able to communicate well, to feel we belong to a community, and, to have some control over our lives. There are also resources that are typically human ways of making life better (Dr Feelgood has been on about these in recent issues) and we neglect them at the risk of getting to the point of "not coping". Examples are: Taking exercise, eating healthily, working at things we are interested in, building relationships, playing and having "recreation".

So when are we being philosophically challenged and when are we, medically speaking, mentally unwell? Nervy would say that it's not always easy to distinguish between the two, and maybe the distinction is arbitrary. Broadly speaking though, when we feel that we are really not coping for a sustained period, and there is no obvious reason (that we can understand) AND it is "out of character" for us to be like that - then we may have become ill and need help in understanding the situation (the first task) and then (the main task) help getting better.

A big complication is the "out of character" bit, because for some people their problems stem mainly from the kind of personality and ways of behaving and thinking that they have developed from childhood and these are hard to change, and although they are not seen as classic "mental illness" they can be more destructive. In any case, understanding is easier than getting better, but the two processes usually happen together and over a variable period of time with the right help. And if you are not really ill it's useful to be reassured that you aren't - sometimes it's hard to measure that yourself - so a bit of professional input can still be good.

There's quite a bit of luck involved in getting over these things, - in finding the right help that is effective and that you can trust - and in finding the right people to share your life with, finding things you enjoy, finding those "human givens" that we need. And you sometimes have to take risks and leaps of faith. There are some people, Nervy would say, (in his vast experience) who are always going to struggle, some who don't get a break, some who never really let themselves take that risk.

Perhaps part of the trouble is that currently we cannot adequately measure the subtle individual differences in how we feel and think about the world and which form our personality and determine to some extent the way we can both help ourselves and receive help. But partly it's that there isn't enough specialist help around in enough variety for those who struggle with the crap they've experienced which can bear such a horrible fruit.

But yet another part of the trouble (Nervy hesitates to say this - but go on, blurt it out, man!) are also doctors and counsellors... Yes, Nervy thinks some professionals don't really cut much ice. Others are excellent. What to do? More on all this next time... and the time after...! And keep sending the emails, however weird. Nervy and The Snipper (Mr Sensible) crave a little conversation with you crazy folk...

Nervy

If you are interested in the concept of "Human Givens" take a look at www.professionalcounselling.co.uk/human_givens. Nervy will also put some information on the Dodgem Logic web site.

WILD and CRAZY

HUMAN GIVENS

Human Givens are some basic truths about the way we operate

- Recognising needs that are not being met can help us understand why we feel bad and can help us find ways we need to be able to improve things for ourselves.

Human Needs

1. We need a sense of purpose.
2. We need people to give us attention and love, and to give love and attention to other people.
3. We need to feel that we belong to or are part of a group (family, friends or community).
4. We need to be able to find meaning in or understand the things that happen to us.
5. We need to feel a degree of control over our lives and the things around us.
6. We need to feel "OK" about ourselves (have good self-esteem).
7. We need to feel safe and secure.
8. We need to be able to communicate effectively with other people.

Possibly unhelpful human tendencies

1. Our emotional minds frequently over-ride our thinking minds ("emotional hijacking").
2. We have a tendency to become "addicted" when something causes our mood to be enhanced.
3. We have a tendency to be more aggressive in our defence of people close to us (sometimes more than we are of ourselves) and this may not be justified.
4. We have a tendency to be tolerant of our own "group" and intolerant of those we see as not part of our group (this applies to friendship groups as well as bigger groups such as cultural and national groups) and to stereotype them.
5. We have a tendency to be biased - in that we overvalue our own experience in interpreting the world around us. This, together with our poor comprehension of co-incidence and "luck", can lead us into superstitious beliefs and prejudices.

Some facts about the human mind - knowing these can help us in dealing with emotional problems

1. There are differences, broadly, in how men and women think, feel and communicate. (Understanding this can help our relationships).
2. Our brains have the ability to, as it were, take a step back from ourselves and observe what we are doing (self-awareness). This can help us acquire a sense of balance in our lives.
3. Stories and images can help us understand ourselves and the world around us (our brains use symbolism).
4. We have the ability to imagine things and this can change how we feel (but imagination can work for us and against us)
5. Our minds and bodies are not separate but are one system - if the mind is affected the body responds and vice versa.
6. When we have our attention totally absorbed in some activity for its own sake (a state of "flow") we feel a sense of happiness and meaning.
7. Music, dancing, games, sports, creative activities and physical exercise can change how we feel.

Work sheet

1. Read through the list of "needs" (1) - tick the ones that you feel are currently being met.
2. What is your "score" out of 8? _____
3. Think about and write down why the other needs are not being met.

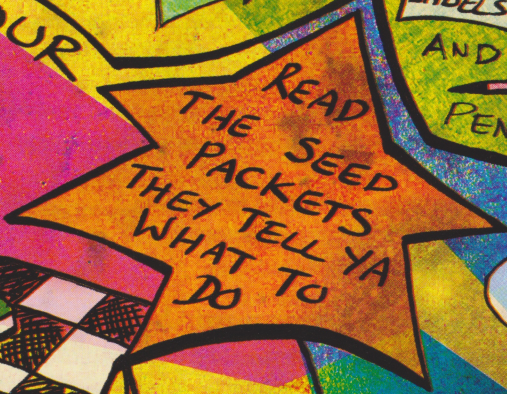
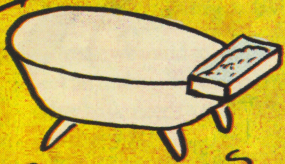
4. Look at the "possibly unhelpful tendencies" (2). Do any of these apply to you at the moment?

5. Look at the "facts about the human mind" (3). Could you use any of these to help you with your problems?

THE URBAN GUERRILLA GARDENERS GUIDE TO GROWING SEEDS



PLACES TO GROW YOUR SEEDS



ASK NEIGHBOURS

CAN YOU HELP
I'LL MAKE
YOU SOME
JAM



HANGING BASKETS



ARE YOU?

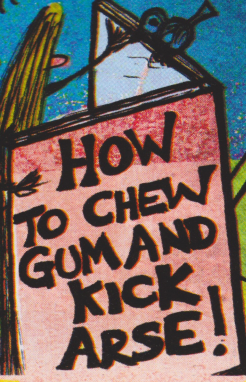


BRIBERY

IS A GOOD TOOL



GARDENING IS A LEARNING CURVE



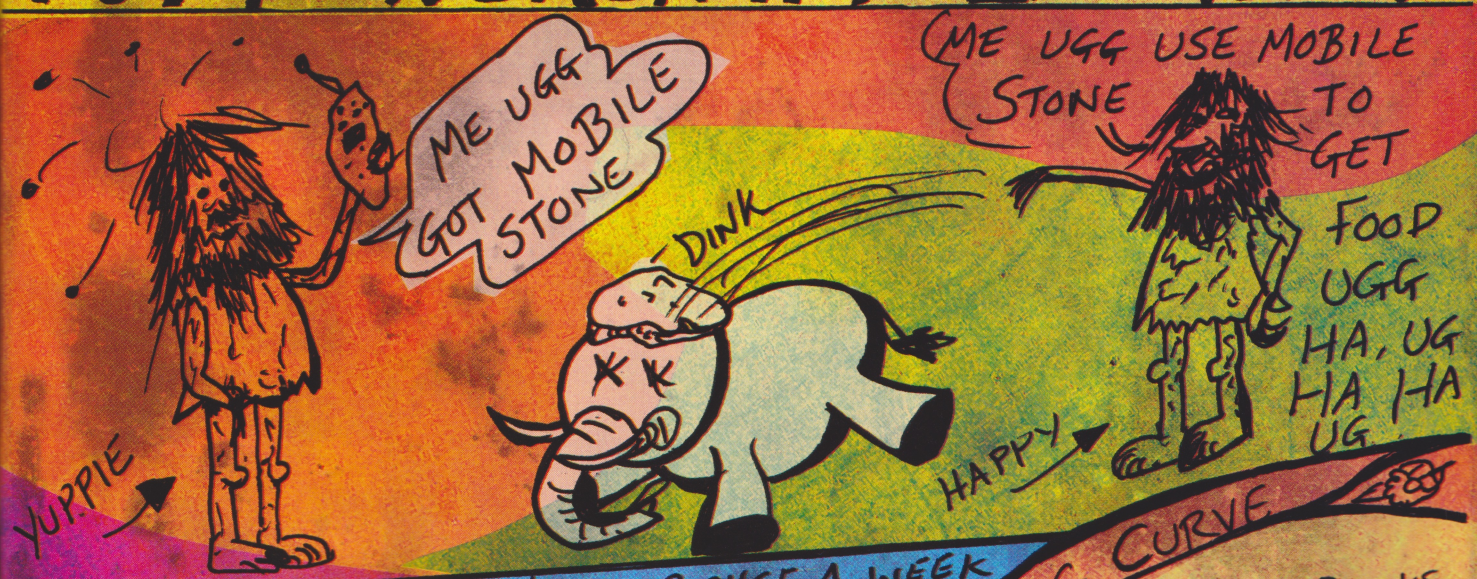
JOIN THE LOCAL LIBRARY
THEY'VE GOT BOOKS.

URBAN GUERRILLA GARDENER ASKS "HOW DID CAVEMAN SURVIVE?" UGG!

YES IT IS COLD, BUT GET SOME MINERALS! GO OUTSIDE NOW AND STAKE YOUR CLAIM!



**START DIGGING, SOWING SEEDS, AND
PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT NOW!**



FORGET ABOUT MODERN CRAP ONCE A WEEK

LOOK JUST HAVE A GO!
CHUCK SEEDS IN THE GROUND
READ THE BLOODY SEED
PACKETS! TRY!
BE BRAVE!
"OUR LAND"
USE IT OR LOSE
IT.

CRAP ONCE A WEEK

GO!

GROUND SEED

GARDENING IS A LEARNING CURVE

GO TO THE LIBRARY THEY HAVE BOOKS

I REPEAT

(BILL HOOK)

IT'S A PLAN

HOME MADE W

WHO'S A TOG

HOW TO CHEW QM AND KICK ARSE

GROW. IT FUCK IT

Alex Musson

Web designer by day, comedy mag writer by night. Mustard is photocopied in front of a live studio audience.

www.mustardmag.org/alex

Alex Novak

Record shop owner and DJ.

myspace.com/spiralarchiverecords.com

Andrew Waugh

Illustrator on Mustard Pages likes to write things and draw funny pictures - some of these can be seen at

thismeanswaugh.blogspot.com

Claire Ashby

I do gardening, art work, chewing gum and kick ass. Hate politicians and red tape. I like being outside.

Calluz

loves chrome and colour.

Dave Hamilton

Co-author of the Self sufficientish Bible and selfsufficientish.com He also works as a freelance writer and runs wild food/foraging courses.

Contact: dave@selfsufficientish.com

Dazer...

He who "darez" wins.

Ellie Mains

Elie Mains was roped into illustrate for Dave Hamiltons articles. Although this is her first ever commission, she has rather enjoyed it and would be willing to do it again.

Contact Eleanor.mains@gmail.com

Ebz

Cut me and i bleed colour.

Gary Mills

Artist, writer, runner & ghost.

www.radonbrainstorm.blogspot.com

Gary Ingham

Writer of Blank Stares and Crickleclaps fanzine, and chief hassle stirrer of Broken Shackle Tabernacle live music promotions of Northampton. Gary was awarded a certificate for completing the 25 meters front crawl in 1986.

www.myspace.com/brokenshackle

Ged Mathews

"Enjoys picking fights with himself, then having make-up sex."

Josie Long

Comedian and writer.

Kevin O'Neil

Stone Age comic book artist, who refuses to be dragged beyond the 19th century. Kevin has ink in his veins and dyslexia explains him having the worlds largest collection of corn.

Lejorne Pindling

A young muscian, trying to bring back music to a respectable state. Check me out on.

soundclick.com/illuzionproductionz

Melinda Gebbie

Former underground cartoonist, professional pornographer, author, sculptress, lecturer and illustrator of Lost Girls[Written by Alan Moore]. Melinda now resides in Northampton for her sins.

Martin Marprelate

He's ancient, he's justified, he's mad as hell about abuses in the 16th century Episcopalian clergy and he isn't going to take it any more.

Margret Killjoy

Margret Killjoy is an itinerant and adventurer who contributes regularly to SteamPunk Magazine and Strangers In A Tangled Wilderness. They have a blog:

www.birdsbeforethetrom.net

Mike Donaldson

Illustrator Mike Donaldson lives and works in a leaky caravan parked beside his home on a council estate in Hull. He knows he really should get a 'proper' job now he has kids and responsibilities and he's nearing forty. miked@hipswitch1.karoo.co.uk

Mary Keeling

Loves sandwiches and dancing.

Norman Adams

Norman Adams is thinking about getting into local politics, and then we're going to detonate him from long distance.

Ol' Bill

"Big Bad Bill from Hopping Hill, never worked and never will," mocked the sergeant. So he never did, and he patrolled Spring Boroughs with a thief in his heart and a whore in his pocket. Aka 'Buzz Bon' in the old Queens Arms. William Martin is co-author of skiffle hit bio, 'Have Guitars.....Will Travel'.

Philip Chapman

Illustrator

Richard Burdett

Founding editor of The Pavement, the news magazine for the homeless. He coordinates the work of the charity in several cities, raises non-statutory funding. He's interested in science fiction, comics and holds a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve. richard@thepavement.org.uk

Robin Ince

Comedian.

Simon Cooper

Illustrator, GSOH, 21ish, honest reliable, short, hairy, likes drawing and colouring in.

www.cooperillo.com

Savage Pencil

www.savagepencil.com

Email savx@savlab.demon.co.uk

Steve Moore

Steve Moore is an old loony who used to write comic books. Now thankfully, he writes what he likes.

Susannah Hogan

Illustrator came across the sea from Sydney as a kind of reverse colonist, running from the sun to the shade: she funds her crippling museum habit by selling her mind and body to an investment bank.

Steve Aylett

Steve Aylett has written books such as LINT, Slaughtermatic and The Inflatable Volunteer, as well as comics like The Caterer and Get That Thing Away From Me.

www.steveaylett.com

Tamsyn Payne

50% CRAFTS, 40% CAKE, 10% MISCELLANEOUS... all woman...ish.

Wallace Create

Northampton based design team. Graphic design, webdesign and photography.

www.wallacecreate.com

Wendi Jarrett

Wendi's food for health activities supports a range of local communities and their "getting to grips with food". She encourages sharing, teaching and learning.

Contact her on 07749873187 or email wendi4news@hotmail.co.uk

Local services

Welfare Rights Northampton
01604 636112

Citizens advice Northampton

0870 120 2433

CAN Northampton

01604 622121

Housing and debt advice Northampton

01604 623700

Homelessness


www.kirkbytrust.org.uk

Northampton Volunteers Centre

01604 637522

The Lowdown Northampton

01604 634385



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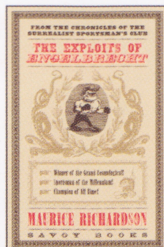
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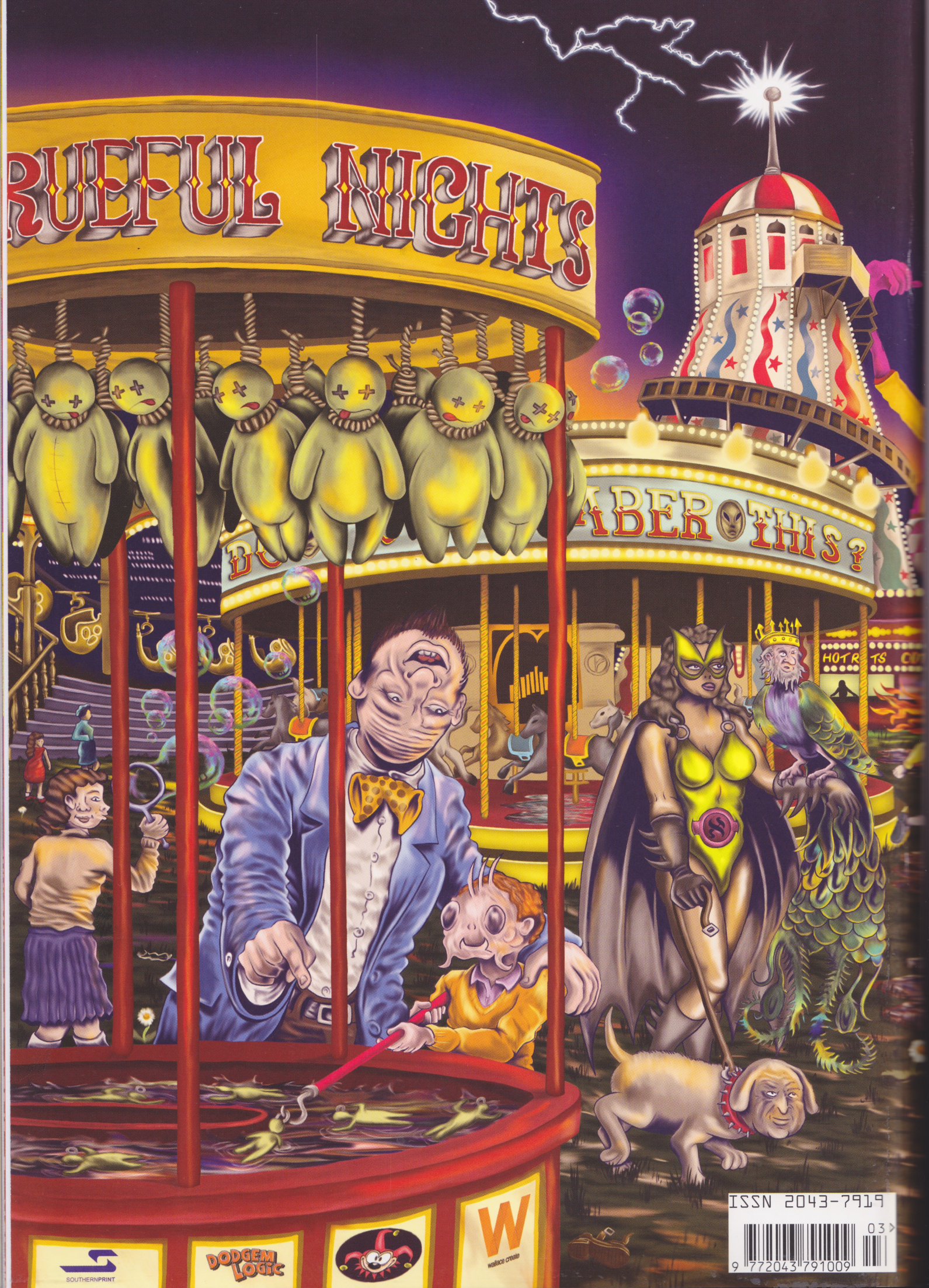
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